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THE LATE REV. DR. RICHARD EDDY

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UNIVERSALISM IN AMERICA.

A HISTORY.

BY

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TO

JOHN A. McALLISTER,

OF PHILADELPHIA,

IN GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF MANY FAVORS RECEIVED IN COLLECTING FACTS RELATING TO THE HISTORY RECORDED IN THESE PAGES,

This Volume is Dedicated

BY THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

SOMETHING more than a quarter of a century ago, the author began to collect material for this work. His progress has been slow, and much of it has been attended with difficulties which those who have had no experience in historic research will fail to understand. The original sources of information, especially in the earlier years of our history, have been meagre, and scattered in many public and private libraries, to reach which has required personal examination. Limited both in means and time, the author has found it difficult to carry on these investigations as rapidly as was desired. Hence the delay in preparing these pages for the public eye.

The present volume, as will be seen, attempts to tell the story of the progress of Universalism to the close of the eighteenth century, and to state the different phases of the Universalist faith up to that time. It has also aimed to give what biographical information could be obtained concerning the early defenders and supporters of that faith; and it is matter of deep regret that so little information can be found in regard to so many of these worthy men.

It is hoped that no unnecessary delays will prevent the early completion of the work. Another vol-

ume will follow this, in which, after the narration of the history in its chronological order, as in these pages, special chapters will be given to Sunday Schools, Education (both Academic and Theological), Hymnology, and Periodical Literature. The volume will also contain a Bibliography of Universalism, giving the title-page, size or form of the edition, and number of pages of whatever book, pamphlet, or tract has been printed in America on this subject, both pro and con. More than two thousand titles have already been examined, copied, and arranged, and it is intended that this part of the work shall be as thorough and exhaustive as the circumstances of the case will allow. To this end general co-operation is earnestly solicited; and as no inconsiderable part of our pamphlet literature has been published expressly for local use, and has never come into general circulation, a special request is hereby made that copies may be sent to the author, who, if desired, will after examination return them to the owner, or if no such request shall be made, will see that they are preserved in the Library of the Universalist Historical Society.

Grateful to all who have hitherto aided in making this record possible to public view, and especially thankful to our Heavenly Father that health and strength have been given for the preparation of these pages, this volume is now submitted to the reader.

RICHARD EDDY.

Melrose, Mass., October, 1884.

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INTRODUCTION.

General Histories of Universalism. — Different Meanings of the Name "Universalist." — The Name first applied to Believers in the Salvation of all Men, in England. — Earliest traces of Universalism. — Universalist Characteristics of the early Theological Schools. — Association of Universalism with Learning. — Traces of Universalism in the Dark Ages. — Revival of Universalism at the Reformation. — Controversies on Universalism in the seventeenth and eighteenth Centuries. — The "Everlasting Gospel." — The "Berleburger Bibel." — Universalism of Jung Stilling. — Universalism Condemned in the Forty-two Articles, in 1552. — Condemnation withdrawn in the Thirty-nine Articles, in 1562. — English Parliament in 1648, against Universalism. — Vane, White, Brooke, Law, Relly, Coppin, and Stonehouse on Universalism.

UNIVERSALISM, the doctrine of the final holiness of all men through the grace of God revealed in Jesus Christ, has been held and defended in some form in all the Christian Ages. It is not, however, the purpose of this work to cover the entire field of its history, but simply to attempt to relate the story of its rise and progress in the United States. The more general history has already been written, — that portion of it covering the period prior to the Protestant Reformation, by the late Hosea Ballou, 2d, D. D., entitled "The Ancient History of Universalism," and published in

1829, but revised and republished in 1872; and on the subsequent period, by the late Thomas Whittemore, D. D., entitled "The Modern History of Universalism," published in 1830, and the European portion, revised and greatly enlarged, republished in 1860. Both of these works are characterized by great fidelity to the facts of history, and are invaluable to all who are seeking information in regard to the opinions which have been held in the Christian Church, on the doctrine of human destiny. Of Dr. Ballou's work, Edward Beecher, D. D., in his "History of Opinions on the Scriptural Doctrine of Retribution," says: "The work is one of decided ability, and is written with great candor and a careful examination of authorities."

Many of the facts presented in Dr. Whittemore's work are reproduced here, but there are added to them a large number of which it is certain that he had no knowledge; and as the first edition of his work, in which alone are references to Universalism in America, has long been out of print, it is not improbable that the entire contents of this volume may be new to many readers.

It may also be presumed that some into whose hands this book may fall, are not in possession of any facts in regard to the more general History of Universalism, and that a brief sketch thereof may not be devoid of interest to them. What must be regarded as a mere mention of the facts in the case, is therefore offered here.

The name "Universalist," as found on the pages of ecclesiastical and dogmatic histories, seldom denotes a believer in the final holiness and happiness of all mankind. Probably its earliest theological use was in

the latter part of the fifteenth century, when it was applied by way of derision to those who held to the *possibility* of the salvation of all men. They were protestants against the reprobation theories of Calvin, without being fully in sympathy with the views of Arminius. For the most part they were French and Germans; and it is said that their views were embraced in nearly all the Protestant universities. Amyraldus and Cameron were the chief apostles of this faith. They distinguished between objective and subjective grace, meaning by the former, that salvation is offered to all men, and is *universal;* and by the latter, that it morally affects the soul in converting it, and is *particular,* — that is, given only to the elect. They were called from the standpoint of the first, "Universalists;" and from that of the second, "hypothetical Universalists." In either view they were far from being what we mean when we speak of Universalists. In the sense in which we employ the name, it seems to have been first used in England about the middle of the last century; and like the name "Christian," was not original with the believers, but was given them by their opponents.

Prior to this time, although there are traces of Universalism in all the Christian ages, no particular name distinguished its believers. During several of the early centuries Universalism was unquestioned orthodoxy; and when it ceased to be dominant, the believers were called "Origenists," and later, "The Merciful Doctors." In the time of the Reformation by Luther, it was held by the Anabaptists; but this name conveyed, of itself, no idea of any theory of the divine purpose as held by those who bore it.

As early as A. D. 130, we come upon the first notice of Universalism, after the days of the apostles, in the writings of the Basilidians, Carpocratians, and Valentinians, the more prominent sects of the Gnostics. The ultimate purification of the race was, according to their theories, by means of the discipline of the souls of the wicked through transmigration. Fifty years later appeared the "Sibylline Oracles," in which Universalism is taught as resulting from the prayers of the saints affected by the miseries of the damned. The Almighty is represented as granting this favor to the redeemed on account of the great love which He bears to them for their fidelity. In A. D. 195 Clemens Alexandrinus, who was president of the Catechetical School at Alexandria, advocated Universalism on the ground of the remedial character of all punishment. His pupil and successor in the school, Origen, taught Universalism on the ground of the ever-continuing freedom of the will, the deep mental and spiritual anguish occasioned by the light and knowledge of the truth, until it leads to repentance, and then the harmony of the soul with God. In addition to his work at Alexandria, Origen also had care for several years of the school at Cæsarea.

In the school at Antioch, Diodorus, afterwards Bishop of Jerusalem, defended Universalism on the ground that the divine mercy far exceeds all the effects and all the deserts of sin. Theodore, of Mopsuestia, a pupil of Diodorus, became his successor. He held that sin is an incidental part of the development and education of the human race; that while some are more involved in it than others, God will overrule it to the final establishment of all in good.

The writings of Theodore became the text-books in the School of Eastern Syria, sometimes held at Edessa and sometimes at Nisibis. He was the founder of the sect of the Nestorians, the reputed author of the liturgy used by them; a church which at one time equalled in its membership the combined adherents of both the Greek and Latin communions, and which has had no rival in missionary zeal. In the addresses and prayers of their liturgy Universalism is distinctly avowed.

These four Schools, — Alexandria, Cæsarea, Antioch, and Eastern Syria, — were the only Schools, properly so called (that is, institutions in which scholars were gathered, and teachers, libraries, etc. were provided for their instruction), known to the early Church. What are sometimes called the Schools of Asia Minor and of Northern Africa, were simply certain teachers and those who adopted their opinions, though not collected in one place where buildings are erected, and teachers employed for purposes of instruction. In Asia Minor, Irenaeus taught the annihilation of the wicked; in Africa, Tertullian taught their everlasting punishment. All the early theological schools, strictly speaking, taught the doctrine of Universalism; and four out of the six of what are popularly called Schools, were advocates of this theory of human destiny.

In the middle of the sixth century Justinian convened a local council, which pronounced Origen's doctrine of Universal salvation heretical. Dœderlein, after quoting, in his "Institutes of Christian Theology," the decree of Justinian against Origen, says: "That was not the belief of all; and in proportion as any one was eminent in learning in Christian Antiquity, the more

did he cherish and defend the hope of the termination of future torments." Drexelius, in his defence of eternal punishment, gives this testimony: —

"That God should doom the apostate angels and men at the day of retribution to eternal torments, seemed so hard and incredible a doctrine to some persons that even Origen himself, who was mighty in the Scriptures, and no less famous for his admirable wit and excellent learning, presumed to maintain in his Book of Principles that both the devils and the damned, after a certain period of years, the fire having purged or cleansed them from their pollutions, should be restored to grace. Augustine and others set forth his error, and condemned him for it. But notwithstanding their condemnation, this error has found a great many in the world who have given it a sort of civil reception. The *Aniti*, heretics so called, dispersed this error throughout all Spain, under various interpretations."

Gieseler, the ecclesiastical historian, says:[1] —

"The belief in the inalienable capacity of improvement in all rational beings, and the limited duration of future punishment, was so general, even in the West, and among the opponents of Origen, that, even if it may not be said to have arisen without the influence of Origen's school, it had become entirely independent of his system."

And Augustine bears this testimony:[2] —

"Some, — nay, very many, — from human sympathy, commiserate the eternal punishment of the damned and their perpetual torture without intermission, and thus

[1] Vol. i. chap. ii. sect. 82.

[2] Enchiridion, chap. cxii.

do not believe in it; not, indeed, by opposing the Holy Scriptures, but by softening all the severe things according to their own feelings, and giving a milder meaning to those things which they think are said in them more terribly than truly."

Although Universalism almost wholly disappears during the period known as the Dark Ages, there are occasional glimpses of it even in the mutilated records which the Papal Church has permitted to descend to us. In the seventh century, Maximus, the Greek monk and confessor, taught Universalism; in the eighth, Clement of Ireland was deposed from the priesthood for teaching that when Christ descended into hell he restored all the damned; while in the ninth, John Scotus Erigena, a famous philosopher who stood at the head of the learned of the Court of France, was a bold defender of Universalism. In the eleventh century, the Albigenses were, according to papal authorities, Universalists; in the twelfth, Raynold, Abbot of St. Martin's in France, was charged before a council with holding "that all men will eventually be saved;" in the thirteenth, Solomon, Bishop of Bassorah, discussed the question of universal salvation, answering it in the affirmative. The Lollards in the fourteenth century taught Universalism in Bohemia and Austria; and at the same period a council convened by Langman, Archbishop of Canterbury, gave judgment against Universalism as one of the heresies then taught in that province. In the early part of the fifteenth century, a sect called "Men of Understanding" taught Universalism in Flanders, advocating it on the ground of the German Mystics, — as did Tauler of Strasburg, and John Wessel, who, with others, have

been called "the Reformers before the Reformation," whose writings Luther industriously studied and greatly admired.

With the Reformation, Universalism made a fresh appearance early in the sixteenth century, chiefly among the Anabaptists. The seventeenth article of the Augsburg Confession, 1536, was expressly framed to "condemn the Anabaptists, who maintain that there shall be an end to the punishments of the damned and of the devils." Denck, Hetzer, and Stanislaus Pannonious, were the most eminent defenders of Universalism at this period. Later in the century Samuel Huber, divinity professor at Wittenberg, taught Universalism, as is alleged by Spanheim; and because, says Mosheim, he would not go back to the old methods of teaching, "he was compelled to relinquish his office and go into exile." Early in the seventeenth century, Ernest Sonner, professor of philosophy at Altorf, published "a theological and philosophical demonstration that the endless punishment of the wicked would argue, not the justice, but the injustice, of God." John William Petersen, at one time Court preacher at Lutin, and subsequently superintendent at Lunenberg, adopted and defended Universalism with such zeal that he was cited before the consistory, and, as he could not conscientiously renounce his convictions, was deprived of his office and forced into private life. In his retirement he published three folio volumes on Universalism, entitled "Musterion Apokatastascōs Pantōn," in which he mentions many who had defended that doctrine. The volumes appeared between the years 1700–1710. They opened a century of spirited controversy, of which Mosheim says:

"The points of theology which had been controverted in the seventeenth century were destined to excite keener disputes in the eighteenth, such 'as the eternity of hell torments, and the final restoration of all intelligent beings to order, perfection, and happiness.'"

Dietelmair, an opponent of Universalism, wrote on its history about the middle of this century. In the preface to his work he speaks of the "contests which rage vehemently enough within the very bounds of the orthodox church in the end of the last century and the beginning of the present."

Among the defences of Universalism contained in the first volume of Petersen's work was the "Everlasting Gospel," attributed to Paul Siegvolk, which was but an assumed name of George Klein-Nicolai, deposed for his Universalism as preacher of Friessdorf. He published other works in defence of Universalism, but the most rapid and lasting popularity belonged to the "Everlasting Gospel," which in forty-five years passed through five editions in Germany.

In 1726 John Henry Haug, professor at Strasburg, having procured the assistance of Dr. Ernest Christoph Hochman, Christian Dippel, Count De Marsay, and others, commenced the publication of the "Berleburger Bibel," an entirely new translation and commentary of the Holy Scriptures. They made themselves familiar with all the writings of the Mystics, and in their great work taught and defended Universalism from the Mystical standpoint. Their work fills eight large folio volumes, the last of which was published in 1742. Strong persecution assailing them, and no printer being willing to risk his office in doing their work, they were compelled

to purchase their own type and a small press. When the church which they had established was at last broken up by their enemies, the members fled to America, taking their press with them, and it was set up by Christopher Sower in Germantown, Pennsylvania.

In 1727 appeared Ludwig Gerhard's "Complete System of the Everlasting Gospel of the Restoration of All Things, together with the Baseless Opposite Doctrine of Eternal Damnation." The author was at one time professor of theology in the University of Rostock, and his publication called forth, according to Walch, no less than fourteen volumes in reply. Jung Stilling, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, an able defender of Christianity against German Rationalism, was an ardent and eminent Universalist. Professor Tholuck wrote, in 1835, that this doctrine "came particularly into notice through Jung Stilling, that eminent man who was a particular instrument in the hand of God for keeping up Evangelical truth in the latter part of the former century, and at the same time a strong patron to that doctrine."

In England, the Protestants, in drawing up their Forty-two Articles of Religion, in 1552, condemned Universalism. Ten years later, when the convocation revised the doctrines of the Church, the number of Articles was reduced to thirty-nine, omitting, among others, the Articles condemning Universalism. Since that time Universalism has not been a forbidden doctrine in the Church of England, but has been advocated and defended by some of the most eminent members of its communion.

The Presbyterian Parliament of 1648, which tempo-

rarily overthrew Episcopacy, passed a law against all heresies, punishing the persistent holders of some with death, and of others with imprisonment. "That all men shall be saved" was among the heresies punished in the latter manner. This law was not long operative, for the Independents, headed by Cromwell, soon overthrew the law-makers. Gerard Winstanley published a work in advocacy of Universalism only a few days after the passage of the law, which was soon followed by similar works from his pen. William Earbury fearlessly preached Universalism. Richard Coppin was active in its advocacy, publishing largely in its exposition and support, and was several times arraigned before the courts for his offence. Samuel Richardson, an eminent Baptist, also wrote largely in its defence. Sir Henry Vane (the younger), member of the Parliament dissolved by Cromwell, and in 1636 Governor of Massachusetts, was a Universalist. Jeremy White, one of Cromwell's chaplains, preached Universalism, and published a work which has passed through several editions. Jane Lead, a Mystic, was the author of several Universalist books. Henry Brooke, an eminent literary writer, avowed his belief in Universalism in his "Fool of Quality," and in a poem on the "Messiah." William Law, author of the "Serious Call," declared in his "Letters," — "As for the purification of all human nature, I fully believe it, either in this world or some after ages."

In 1750, James Relly, of London, who had been a preacher in Whitefield's connection, shocked at the doctrine of reprobation, was by meditation and study led into another scheme of redemption, some of the

peculiarities of which may be said to have had their origin with him. As John Murray, who figures so largely in the "History of Universalism in America," was an avowed and zealous adherent and advocate of Relly's views, a statement of this peculiar theology will be found in the second chapter of this work.

Richard Coppin, just now alluded to as being active in the time of Cromwell, regarded the Scriptures as having a hidden sense, their teachings being chiefly allegorical; and he brought a very fertile imagination to bear in their interpretation. All rewards and punishments were held by him to be confined to this life, and the future, wholly the gift of grace, had little or nothing in common with the present.

Sir George Stonehouse, of the Established Church of England, advocated and defended Universalism in three works published between 1760 and 1773. He seems to have held the theory of pre-existence, and that men were sent into this world, with Adam as their head, with a view to their recovery from sins committed in a previous state. Salvation is the result of a present acceptance of Christ, and relieves one from the further penal effects of sin; restoration comes only to those who, neglecting salvation here, incur all the penalties of sin, and from their future prison-house cry out for mercy, and being penitent, are forgiven and blessed. Salvation belongs only to the present life; restoration only to the future state of existence.

From this brief description of the extent and manner in which Universalism has been held in other lands, we turn to a consideration of its history in America.

UNIVERSALISM IN AMERICA.

CHAPTER I.

1636–1770.

Sources of Universalism in America. — The Mystics. — Samuel Gorton. — Sir Henry Vane. — Joseph Gatchell. — Dr. George de Benneville. — George Rapp. — Thomas Say. — German and Dutch Emigrants to Pennsylvania. — The Dunkers. — The Moravians. — Episcopalian Universalists. — Rev. Richard Clarke. — Rev. Robert Yancey. — Rev. Jacob Duché. — Rev. William Smith, D. D. — The proposed Prayer-Book. — Rev. John Tyler. — Mr. Tyler's Letter to Rev. Noah Parker. — Rev. Samuel Peters's letter to Mr. Tyler. — Universalists among the New England Congregationalists. — Rev. Charles Chauncy, D. D. — Rev. John Clarke, D. D. — Attacks on Chauncy's Pamphlet and Book. — Rev. Jonathan Mayhew, D. D. — Rev. Jeremy Belknap, D. D. — Rev. Joseph Huntington, D. D. — Attack on Universalism by the "First Presbytery of the Eastward." — The Synod of New York and Philadelphia on the Prevalence of Universalism. — Rev. Thomas Fessenden. — Rev. Jacob Mann. — Rev. Samuel Mead. — Rev. Dan Foster. — Rev. Mr. Taft. — Rev. Perley Howe. — Rev. Samuel Whiting.

UNIVERSALISM came to America through at least five channels, independent of the teachings of Rev. John Murray, who is commonly called the Father of Universalism in the New World.

I. THE MYSTICS.

1. Samuel Gorton, who figures conspicuously in the early history of the Massachusetts, Plymouth, and Rhode Island Colonies, came to Boston, from England, in March, 1636–37. Shortly after his arrival, he re-

moved to Plymouth, and before long to Rhode Island. Mr. Bancroft (History, i. 419), speaks of him as "a wild but benevolent enthusiast, who used to say heaven was not a place, there was no heaven but in the hearts of good men, no hell but in the mind." John Angell, one of his followers, said of him: —

"He was a holy man; wept day and night for the sins and blindness of the world; his eyes were a fountain of tears, and always full of tears, — a man full of thought and feeling. He was universally beloved by all his neighbors, and the Indians, who esteemed him, not only as a friend, but one high in communion with God and heaven; and indeed he lived in heaven."

Mr. Staples, in a biographical sketch appended to a modern edition of Gorton's "Simplicity's Defence Against Seven-headed Policy," warmly eulogizes him by saying that "nothing was ever alleged against him, even by his most inveterate enemies." On the contrary, Cotton Mather, whose censure of those from whom he differed is not unfrequently their highest praise, says, that "he degenerated into a beast," and styles his opinions "blasphemous and enormous."

Mackie, in his "Life of Samuel Gorton"[1] says of Gorton:—

"The Puritan writers, generally, considered him a teacher of strange doctrines, similar to those imputed to the Familists."

And, condensing from Mosheim, More, Neal, and Sewell, he adds: —

"The Family of Love, so called, was a sect established in the sixteenth century in Holland, by Henry Nicholas, who

[1] Sparks's American Biography.

maintained that he was commissioned by Heaven to teach that the essence of religion consists not in the belief of any particular religious creed, or the observance of any peculiar form of public worship, but simply in the feeling of divine love. The Service of Love was declared to be the dispensation of the Holy Ghost, surpassing that of Christ, which was the dispensation of belief, and that also of Moses, which was the dispensation of law. The Familists believed in the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, allegorized the doctrines of revelation, and viewed the facts of Scripture as not having any historical, but only a spiritual importance. In England, where the sect made, for a time, no little progress, they held private assemblies for devotion, 'for which they tasted of the severities of the government,' and were charged with unbecoming laxity of morals, at the same time that they were making extraordinary pretences to spiritual perfection. As the Seraphic Family danced, sang, and made merry, they were denounced by George Fox as a 'motley tribe of fanatics.'

"As to what were really the religious doctrines held and taught by Gorton, there has been considerable diversity of opinion. It is, indeed, perhaps quite an impossible matter to obtain from his writings any clear and adequate view of his peculiar tenets. It is more than probable that he himself had no distinct apprehension of them. His thoughts are very obscurely expressed in his writings; his style is exceedingly involved; his leading ideas are unfolded but incidentally and partially. Gorton's intellectual capacity was, indeed, great; but his sentiment prevailed over his reason. His mind was rather brilliant than sound, too impulsive to be clear. . . . Respecting the nature of Christ, Gorton taught that it was both human and divine; the two parts whereof were neither united, nor will they ever be separated in time; and both together constitute one eternal being. Christ's

death and humiliation he considered also to be of infinite duration; for with him 'are all things ever present, being himself the fulness thereof.' His death and humiliation he regarded, though not in the sense of those who receive the doctrine of universal salvation, as the propitiation for 'the sins of the whole world.'

"Viewed in connection, these two doctrines of the divinity of Christ, and of the life of the believing soul in him, will appear at the present day to have somewhat of a pantheistic character. Indeed, one of the early writers, in speaking of Gorton, went so far as to say that he 'magnified his own glorious light, that could see himself to be personally Christ, God-man.' The concentrating tendency, so to speak, of Gorton's mind was certainly very strong. The scope and range of his thoughts were wide, but it was his habit to reduce all particular truths to general ones. To behold all things in Christ; to see them revolving in him in harmonious relations; to trace all the channels of life, the impulses of goodness up to him, as the one infinite, universal fountain, 'needing nothing out of itself to send forth its streams, but only its own fulness;' this was the aspiration of his mind, and its chief delight.

"In illustration of a general tendency of this sort in Gorton's mind, it may be mentioned, also, that he differed from his brethren of Plymouth and Massachusetts, in his views of the relation between this life and the future. While they, undervaluing this state of existence, concentrated all their hopes of happiness, if not of improvement, on that which is to succeed it, he, on the contrary, affirmed that the soul now exists in eternity; and was reported to have taught, that there is no heaven or hell save in the mind. The soul seemed to him to be independent of place, as the future and the past were but eternal now. 'Such doctrine,' he says, 'as sets forth a time to come, of more worth and glory

than either is, or hath been, keeps the manna till to-morrow, to the breeding of worms in it'" (pp. 389–394).

Gorton lived in turbulent times in New England, and has been generally regarded as a man inimical to the early government of Massachusetts. Recently "A defence of Samuel Gorton and the Settlers of Shawomet" [Warwick, R. I.], by George A. Brayton, late Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Rhode Island, has been published, disproving the old notions entertained of Gorton, and showing that, under cover of political offences, he was persecuted for his religious opinions. He was a Mystic who had little or no sympathy with any views differing from his own. Hence, though he defended the Quakers in their efforts for toleration, he strongly dissented from their theology; and while agreeing with Roger Williams and the Baptists in their theory of freedom of conscience, he fought against their notions of ordinances, "beating down," as one of his followers expresses it, "all outward ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, with unanswerable demonstration." Occasionally he expounded his views orally, but preaching was not his business. His work was chiefly done with his pen; and some of his unpublished manuscripts are still preserved. He delighted in titles based on the recognition of his mystical views; and in one of his conveyances of land, styles himself, "Professor of the Mysteries of Christ." As might be expected, his religious opinions are not very lucidly expressed or explained in his writings. He took such delight in hidden meanings and in allegory, and had such fondness for far-fetched allusions and images, that a degree of obscurity hangs over his

sentences and makes them the subject of much speculation. In several passages, however, his belief in universal salvation seems evident. Thus, in "Simplicity's Defence," he speaks of some who were "fearful of trouble and disquiet, not knowing better, but that the cross of Christ is terrible; as though the Sonne of God had not taken away the terror and angry face of it, putting no less disparagement upon him, but as though the sting were in death still, being ignorant of this, how that by death he overcomes death, even until now." The nature of man, he says, is of

"that vast emptiness, that nothing but the fulness and power of an all-sufficient God can possibly supply and perfect it; and so there is complete eating and drinking, which is that full satisfaction and nourishment that can be found in none, save only in the Son of God himself; for it is a weakness of that nature and latitude, that nothing can supply and make up but God himself; and it is a power of that fulness and perfection that can take nothing into unity with itself that may be thought to add anything (no, not in the least) unto that strength and vigor that is in God; for then it were not an Almighty power of God that saves us."

In a poetical effusion prefixed to the same work, he says: —

"The nations shall come forth at once, yea, at one birth;
Truth in the change of one, reneweth all the earth;
Else were not perfect good in any one erect,
Nor sin were full, through th' fall, that great defect.

If change of one, were not a world renewed,
What nation, then, not brought in and subdued,
When truth is published, though but unto one
Embraced, received? Oh, happy state of man,
All Gentiles brought in, who can want?"

So also, he says: —

> "The light of heaven, God himself ordained
> To be that thing whereby man is maintained
> In wisdom, honor, happiness, and peace;
> That doth from serpent, sin, death, hell, release:
> And not conjectural, doubtful, subtil notion,
> Set forth by art with sign of great devotion.[1]"

This is indeed obscure; but we do not think that we mistake its import. The mystical union of all souls with God, or Christ, who is the fulness of life and salvation to all, was a favorite thought with many Universalists of that day, in the Old World; notably so with Richard Coppin, Gorton's contemporary in England, an avowed Universalist, who said, as did Gorton, "There is no heaven and hell but what is in man."

2. Sir Henry Vane, the younger, Governor of Massachusetts in 1636, was also a Mystic, and some of his utterances read like avowals of belief in universal salvation. He was a man of rare scholarly attainments, a radical thinker, and a fearless exponent of his convictions.

He came to Boston in 1635, and although but twenty-three years of age, so impressed the people with his intellectual and moral greatness that his counsels were sought, and in a year from his arrival he was chosen Governor. About this time the colonists thought that as they were all professedly religious people, they ought to make the laws of God, as delivered by Moses to the commonwealth of Israel, the basis of their civil polity. At the request of the General Court, Rev. John Cotton drew up an abstract of the laws of Moses, omitting

[1] Simplicity's Defence, in R. I. Hist. Col. ii. pp. 29, 36, 39, 184–5.

such as were of temporary obligation, and in their nature peculiar to the Jewish economy. It was published, but not adopted. "Another abstract, subsequently made, and supposed to have been the joint labor of Mr. Cotton and Sir Henry Vane *was* adopted, and was printed in London, in 1641." [1]

Hon. Edward Everett, in a Review of Upham's "Life of Sir Henry Vane," spoke of him as —

"the man to whom Sir James Mackintosh has ascribed 'one of the most profound minds that ever existed, not inferior perhaps to Bacon;' — and if not inferior to Bacon in the intellectual, how vastly above him in the moral properties of a man."

And again, he quotes Sir James as saying of Vane's writings: —

"His works, which are theological, are extremely rare, and display astonishing powers. They are remarkable, as containing the first direct assertion of the liberty of conscience." [2]

Bishop Burnett, in his "Life and Times" (p. 108), says: —

"Vane's friends told me that he leaned to Origen's notion of an universal salvation of all, both of devils and the damned."

Rev. Mr. Crouch, in a sermon of the "Eternity of Hell Torments," published in England a century ago, says: —

[1] Annals of the American Pulpit, by William B. Sprague, D. D., vol. i. pp. 27, 28.

[2] North American Review, vol. xlii. pp. 125, 126.

"In the next century (1600 to 1700) when nothing was too absurd, either in government or religion, to want patronage, the doctrine of Origen, among a thousand wild and monstrous extravagancies, was first introduced and received here. It formed part of the unintelligible creed of Sir Henry Vane."

Peter Bayne, who holds that Vane has been too highly extolled by his admirers, acknowledges his abilities as a thinker, but questions the propriety of classing him with the believers of universal salvation. In an article on *Vane the Younger*, in "The Contemporary Review," [1] he says: —

"If it is the blasphemy of blasphemies, as Vane would have affirmed, to deny that the Almighty must by necessity of nature, proceed 'in such manner as is exactly consistent with the wisdom and justice of a most holy God,' the greatest happiness of the greatest number throughout the universe seems likely enough to be brought about by His government. The *will* of the Infinite Reason *must* be reasonable, of the Infinite Justice just, of the Infinite Love loving. If, as has been maintained by some, Vane held the theory of universal salvation as held by Origen, no theory of the universe could have been either more sublime or more joyous than his; but I have seen no evidence under his own hand or from his own lip to this effect, and I have seen writing of his which appears to be inconsistent with Origen's opinion."

The literary and critical abilities of Mr. Bayne entitle his opinions to no little weight; but the writings of Sir Henry Vane are accessible, and we may judge for ourselves as to their teachings. One of his latest

[1] Vol. xxi. p. 166.

works was entitled: "The Retired Man's Meditations, or the Mysterie and Power of Godliness." In this, speaking of "The Incarnation and the fruits thereof," he says: —

"We see thereby the Devil and his Angels disappointed in their wicked designs; who, by the bringing in of Sin, were in hopes to have hindered the growing up of Jesus, the Branch that was to spring out of this Root; but David's Root, sitting as Lord at God's right hand, *had before obtained that power which was to subdue all enemies, and lay them flat at his footstool.* David's offspring, therefore, was in no danger of having his course stopped, or race hindered, wherein, as a Mighty Saviour and Redeemer, he was to go forth, *and rescue the whole spiritual seed out of the hands of Sin and Satan to bring them into the true Rest, and obtain a gracious reprieve and forbearance for the most obstinate and rebellious also*" (p. 91).

Again: speaking of Jesus as the Second Adam, he says: —

"He did all that was needful, and all that God required to be done, for the remission of sin, *and the utter abolishing and removing it out of man's nature with an absolute incapacity of ever returning more upon the true and right heirs of salvation.* In respect whereof it is said, that as by one man's disobedience many (*that is, all*) were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, many (*that is, all*) *shall be made righteous*, — having that ransom paid, and means provided in him to make them righteous: *so that there shall be no necessity remaining upon any to perish, forasmuch as sufficient provision is made to bring all men to repentance and to the knowledge of the truth; that as in Adam all died, so in this sense all, again, in Christ are made alive*" (p. 95).

Finally, he says of Christ, that

"He is made of God wisdom, righteousness, justification, and redemption unto the right heirs of salvation, *and is become the ransom and propitiation for all sinners; not for those only who so believe as that they shall be eternally saved, but for the whole world,* as upon the terms of the first covenant, renewed in the blood of Christ, they are reunited unto God, and admitted again into converse and fellowship with him" (p. 104).

On another occasion he said: —

"Death, instead of taking anything away from us, gives us all, even the perfection of our natures; sets us at liberty both from our own bodily desires, and others' domination; makes the servant free from his master. It does not bring us into darkness, but takes darkness out of us, us out of darkness; and puts us into marvellous light. Nothing perishes, or is dissolved by death, but the veil and covering, which is wont to be done away from all ripe fruit. It brings us out of a dark dungeon, through the crannies whereof our sight of light is but weak and small, and brings us into an open liberty, an estate of light and life unveiled and perpetual."[1]

To what extent, if at all, Vane sought to propagate his religious opinions in Massachusetts is unknown. Cotton Mather[2] says that the evidence is conflicting, and cites "an old New English manuscript" as saying that, "before he was scarce warm in his seat" as governor, "he began to broach new tenets;" but what they were is not stated.

[1] Quoted by Rev. Dr. Whittemore, in the "Modern History of Universalism," vol. i. p. 145, from "Statesmen of the Commonwealth of England"

[2] In his "Magnalia," book ii. chap. v.

Whoever has read Wendell Phillips's eulogy on Vane, will not believe that he was a man to shrink from the avowal of his views, if occasion demanded it; but as he was here in turbulent times, and his stay was brief, his official duties probably left him little time or opportunity for religious controversy beside that forced upon him by the Hutchinsonian agitation.

3. Universalist views, from the Mystical standpoint, were also entertained in Marblehead, Massachusetts, as early as July, 1684, when, as appears from the Suffolk County Court files: —

"Joseph Gatchell of Marblehead was presented 'that he not having the feare of God before his eyes being instigated by the divill at the house of Jeremiah Gatchell in discourse ab^{t} generall Salvation (w^{ch} he s^{d} was his beleife) & that all men should be saved, being answered that our Saviour Christ sent forth his disciples and gave them comission to preach the Gospell and that whosoever Repents and beleives shall be saved; to which Joseph Gatchell Answered if it be so he was an Imperfect saviour and a foole." He was "sentenced to be returned from this place to the pillory to haue his head & hand put in, haue his toung drawn forth out of his mouth & peirct through wth a hott Iron then to be returnd to the prison there to Remayne until he sattisfye & pay all y^{e} charges of his tryall & ffees of Court w^{ch} came seuen pounds."

4. But by far the most eminent among the Mystics, as an avowed believer in and preacher of Universalism, was Dr. George De Benneville, who came to America, and settled in Pennsylvania, in 1741. Of French parent-

age, he was born in London, in July, 1703. Very early in life he began to preach, and his enthusiastic manner attracted such attention that the French Protestant ministers in England were made uneasy by what they heard of him, and made a demand that he should give them a confession of his faith; and on their hearing his avowal of faith in the restoration of all souls, informed him that they could not own him as a member of their church.

Believing that he was called to go into France and preach the gospel, he took passage at Dover for Calais, and on his arrival began to preach in the market-place. Arrested by the civil authorities, he was punished with eight days' imprisonment, and informed that on a second attempt his life would be in danger. Leaving Calais, he went into Normandy, where his ancestors had lived, and found some, even clergymen, who were willing to associate with him, whose names he has recorded, — a Durant, De la Chevrette, Dumoulin, L'Achar, and others. They met in valleys and woods, and sometimes great crowds gathered to hear them. Some of their number were arrested, of whom several were hanged, others whipped by the hands of the hangman, and branded with a hot iron, and some were sent to the galleys. At length De Benneville was seized, and with him, Durant, of Geneva. After a month's imprisonment, they were condemned to die, Durant to be hanged, and De Benneville to be beheaded. Together they went to the place of execution. Durant ascended the ladder, sung a psalm, and died joyfully. De Benneville fell on his knees, praying to God to forgive his murderers and expecting instant death; but while the executioner was

binding his hands, a courier arrived from Louis XV. with a reprieve. He was taken to Paris and imprisoned, and finally liberated at the intercession of the Queen. After this he went to Germany, preached among the French refugees there, and formed quite an extensive acquaintance among the nobility of Germany and Holland. Count De Marsay was one of his most intimate friends, and through him he became intimate, if not associated with, Haug, Hochman, Dippel, and others, who were then engaged in the translation and commentary known as the "Berleburger Bibel." After preaching in Germany about eighteen years, he was taken sick, was supposed to be dead, and was placed in his coffin for burial. Reviving, he alleged, as ever after he with great sincerity believed, that during his separation from his body, he had been both to heaven and hell, and had been privileged with a view of what is to take place in "the dispensation of the fulness of times," — "the restoration of all souls." He declares that he heard the heavenly host shouting with one voice, and saying: "An eternal deliverance! An eternal restoration! An everlasting restitution of all things!"

Restored to health he again began to preach, but was once more imprisoned, and on being set at liberty, resolved to remove to America, where he arrived in 1741, feeling himself called to preach the gospel in the New World. Some of the believers in Germany had preceded him in emigrating to our shores, and others followed not long after. There were refugees also from other lands, enjoying liberty of conscience in Pennsylvania. Among these was Jean Bertolet, from France, who had made his home in the town

of Oley. Visiting Germantown in 1743, he was so charmed with the discourse and character of De Benneville that he persuaded him to accompany him home, as the instructor of his children and physician to the neighborhood. There were no churches then in Oley, the nearest being about ten miles distant, if we except a Moravian school-house and mission station some three miles north of the place, established about this time. Here De Benneville occasionally preached, but was at length opposed by the proprietors. In 1745 he married the daughter of Mr. Bertolet, and at that time joined with his father-in-law in the erection of a substantial mansion, still standing, one large chamber of which he constructed especially for convenience as a place of worship and a school-room.

"This room will seat fifty people. The original entrance was by stairs leading up on the outside of the house, entering by two doors, directly over the main entrance below. Including the room of entrance, one hundred persons could easily be seated within sound of the speaker's voice; but as the country was then sparsely settled, it is not probable that his congregations often reached that number." [1]

Here Dr. De Benneville resided till 1755, when, on account of the violent depredations of the Indians in the vicinity, he, in common with many others, became alarmed and removed to Green Lane, Germantown, where he resided till 1768, when he moved to Milestown, where he resided till his death in 1793. He paid occasional visits to Oley till an advanced age,

[1] Rev. James Shrigley, in "The Christian Leader," Oct. 4, 1883.

being accompanied in his last visit by Rev. Elhanan Winchester.

The German emigrants to Germantown brought with them the printing press which they had used at Berlinburgh, and on it was printed, in 1753, doubtless at the suggestion of De Benneville, an English edition of Siegvolck's "Everlasting Gospel," the first book published in America in defence of Universalism. A review of this book by Rev. N. Pomp, published in 1774, contains the statement that the doctrine of the restoration of all things

"was never more widely spread than in the present century; of which the numerous controversial writings, *pro* and *con*, that have appeared in Europe within the last fifty years, are sufficient proof. Yet nowhere has this doctrine been more successful and made greater progress than here in Pennsylvania. In Europe the industry of many learned and godly men has thrown insuperable obstacles in its way; but here the stream has been allowed free course, and the fire has burned as it would. There were already many copies of the "Everlasting Gospel," which, not being privileged in Germany, were purchased at a cheap rate by money-making people, and brought here; and they have also been industriously scattered by the press. The charming title, "The Everlasting Gospel," induced many ignorant people to buy the book, and the doctrine it inculcates inclined many to believe."

There is no doubt that we are indebted to Dr. De Benneville for the extensive circulation of this book, and for industrious missionary work in spreading a knowledge of Universalism. His time was for several years about equally divided between the practice of

medicine, in which he had great skill, and by means of which he supported himself, and preaching, without compensation, wherever opportunity offered. Until prevented by old age, it was his custom to perform a journey twice a year for the purpose of preaching. His visits at such times were through the western portion of Pennsylvania, and to Maryland and Virginia. In 1790 he writes to his daughter: "In my old age, since I am eighty-eight years old, my mind is still set to preach the Gospel." The Dunker churches were freely open to him, and also, for a while, the Moravian; but the latter were at last shut against him. The Moravians had, it seems, at the instigation of Count Zinzendorf, established, in 1742, "The Pennsylvania Synod," embracing representatives of all the German religious denominations in that province. They adopted as their title "The Congregation of God in the Spirit," and had for their aim the union of the German churches on the basis of experimental religion. Its labors were continued six years, when it was changed to a Synod of the United Brethren's Church, exclusively Moravian. "This interesting movement," says Rev. Mr. De Schweinitz,[1] "was a beautiful but premature ideal, which, in the end, served rather to augment the existing differences among religionists than to establish the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace." One of the sessions of the Synod was held at Oley, and was made up of representatives of "Moravians, Lutherans, Reformed, Tunkers, Mennonites, Schwenkfelders, Separatists, and Hermits." Possibly,

[1] The Life and Times of David Zeisberger, by Edmund De Schweinitz, p. 106.

on the demonstration of the impracticability of the union sought by the Synod, the Moravians may have excluded all others from their houses of worship; and if so, no special censure of De Benneville's views may have been intended by his exclusion.

Dr. De Benneville in his later life manifested a great aversion to the publication of anything about himself, and just before his death he destroyed many of his manuscripts. Among the papers which remained was a German translation, in De Benneville's writing, of a Commentary on the Apocalypse, by Count de Marsay. This was published in Lebanon, Pennsylvania, in 1808, making a thick duodecimo volume, of 634 pages. As specimens of its Universalism, we here present several of its comments on two passages in Revelation: —

xv. 4: "Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest." — "This shows in like manner how all men, all peoples and nations shall one day come to worship God. But in order that they may and will do this, it is necessarily required that they subject themselves to God, that they return to His order and recognize Him as their Sovereign and Lord: but in order to this, it is necessary that their wills cease to be rebellious; and from this moment their condemnation will cease, because the rebellion of their wills, the cause of their damnation, has ceased. For how without this can they worship God, since worship consists in this, that they acknowledge His sovereign power, and freely subject themselves to Him and render such homage and service as belongs to Him; and this willing subjection and homage must be offered especially to God, who alone will be loved and worshipped by His creatures freely and without force or

compulsion. For God has endowed his creatures with all their noble powers, that is, with free will, to this very end, that freely and without compulsion, but out of love, they should subject themselves to Him, as that wherein true worship consists, and which alone is acceptable to Him, and is the fulfilling of the great commandment (Matt. xxii. 37), 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.' From this it follows that all nations in general, and consequently all men in particular who are born in this world, who have lived in it, and shall hereafter live in it, — all these men, I say, endowed with intellects, must of free will and without compulsion, love God, and finally come to worship Him. Hence they can in no manner be rebellious, nor consequently be damned forever and ever without end. On the contrary, they will one day change their rebellion into obedience, and subject themselves to their God. . . . Hence, these judgments of God are, properly speaking, no judgments of wrath and punishment, whose end is to destroy those upon whom they are visited, either to annihilate them or to torment them eternally. No, indeed, not so! For that would run directly against what such a God can do, of whom the beloved Apostle says that He is Love. If His nature is such that He is Love, the purest Love, then He cannot abandon creatures whom He made partakers of this nature, that He should not render them partakers also of His felicity and render them happy in union with Him, which was the end for which He created them. It cannot be, I say, that as God is the purest love, he should leave these miserable creatures oppressed under the weight of His judgments, world without end."

xx. 13: "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to

their works." — "Then will there be a new earth. For the devil and the damned there will remain no other place of imprisonment than the abyss in the centre of the earth, which will continue to the restoration of all things. Then will this also be changed, since all sin and evil must be annihilated."

5. A phase of German Mysticism originating with George Rapp, a German born at Iptingen, in Würtemberg, in 1757, was brought to this country in 1803, by its founder, fleeing hither from persecution. At first the community settled in Butler County, Pa. Ten years later they moved to Posey County, Ind., and in 1825 returned to Pennsylvania, establishing their home in Beaver County, at a place which they named Economy. They are sometimes called Rappists, sometimes Harmonists, and not unfrequently, from the name of their settlement, Economists. For a few years, community of goods, and the hope of the approach of the millenium, chiefly distinguished them; but in 1807, under the influence of what they regarded as a great awakening, they voluntarily and unanimously adopted celibacy, which they have maintained till the present time. For several years their society was in a flourishing condition, and they held their ground numerically till 1831, numbering at times about a thousand members. A pretended Count Maximilian de Leon, joined them in the year last mentioned, and soon sowed discord. They are now reduced in numbers to about eighty, all Germans, and no longer seek accessions.

It is stated as the eighth article of their religious belief, that

"They believe in the ultimate redemption and salvation of all mankind: but hold that only those who follow the celibate life, and otherwise conform to what they understand to be the commandments of Jesus, will come at once into the bright and glorious company of Christ and his companions; that offenders will undergo a probation and purification." [1]

As this concludes our notice of the Mystics, it may not be amiss to mention here two other sources from which the Universalism mentioned by Rev. Mr. Pomp as prevailing so extensively in Pennsylvania, may have come.

1. Cotemporary with Dr. De Benneville, and on terms of closest intimacy with him, was Thomas Say, of Philadelphia, a well-known philanthropist, and a member of the Society of Friends. Born in 1709, he became a believer in Universal Salvation when quite young, and, singularly, through the instrumentality of what he regarded as a supernatural vision. Dying in 1796, he left a manuscript of his life and writings, which was published by his son. In it he says that

"The variety of God's dispensations to man is alone the effect of his universal, omnipotent, and never-ending love to his creatures, and which in the end must and will accomplish the salvation of all men, especially of those that believe." "Some," he says, "have thought that the promulgation of the doctrine of universal benevolence, and restoration of man, might do injury at this time; but I believe differently, and think that every soul which can be made fully sensible of this extraordinary divine love to the creation will be a humbled creature, and often have to adore the great and powerful

[1] McClintock and Strong's Cyclopædia, vol. viii. pp. 911–913. "Star and Covenant," Chicago, Nov. 13, 1880.

condescending mercy of Omnipotence to itself, and to all men; and have frequently to render thanksgiving and praise, as at the footstool of grace and power. I hope and believe that this principle will yet cover the earth as the waters cover the sea (Isaiah xi. 9), so that there may be none found who cannot say, 'Come, brother; come, sister.'"

There is reason to believe that many Friends, or Quakers, shared this belief with him, for —

2. Many of the early emigrants from Germany and Holland to Pennsylvania were avowed believers in the restoration of all things, before leaving their native shores. Five years before William Penn came to America, viz., in 1677, he made, in company with George Fox, Robert Barclay and others of his religious belief, a visit to Holland and Germany, for the purpose of spreading the knowledge of the truth as he held it. In Holland he was brought in contact with the Mennonites, then divided into two parties, one of which was favorably inclined to, if it did not profess and advocate, Universalism. In Germany he found his chief friends among the Mystics of the school of Jane Lead, whose works were translated and extensively circulated in Germany. Here, too, he made the acquaintance of Dr. J. Wilhelm Petersen, and of Johanna Eleonora von Merlau, a woman of more than ordinary mental abilities, and subsequently the wife of Petersen, who, as well as her husband, wrote and published in defence of the doctrine of the "Restoration of all things." With the foundation principles of the Mystics, Penn and his associates had much in common; and when, a few years later, Penn came into possession of his great

estate in America, and threw open the State of Pennsylvania for the purpose of trying the "holy experiment," as he styled it, of the toleration of all religions, the Mennonites of Holland, and the Mystics of Germany were among the first to become purchasers of land in the new country. Eleonora von Merlau was one of ten to purchase 25,000 acres for the purpose of establishing thereon the town of Germantown, and it was originally her intention, and subsequently that of Petersen, to whom she was married in 1680, to emigrate to the New World. This part of the plan never was executed, but the Germans who did come and who were the original settlers of Germantown, Pennsylvania, were for the most part sympathizers with Petersen and his wife in their religious views.[1]

II. THE DUNKERS.

THE second channel through which Universalism came to us was the German Baptists, sometimes called Tunkers, more often Dunkers, and as they prefer to be called, Brethren. They originated at Schwarzenau, Germany, in 1708; but on account of persecution came to America in 1719, and originally settled in Pennsylvania. They were from the first believers in universal restoration, but have, in the main, held it privately. A division occurred in their ranks in 1725, led by Conrad Beissel, mainly on the question of the Sabbath, Beissel and his followers insisting on the observance of the seventh day. At first the seceders resorted to a hermit life, and subsequently they established a monastical

[1] Pennsylvania Magazine, vol. ii. pp. 237–282.

society at Ephrata, Pennsylvania. Both branches held to the doctrine of the restoration of all souls.

Israel Acrelius, Provost Magister of the Swedish Church in America, describes a visit which he made to Ephrata in 1753, for the purpose of studying the doctrines and mode of life of the followers of Beissel. He found among them Peter Müller, who had formerly been a minister in the Reformed Church, in Germany, and whom he describes as a very learned man, for whom "the brethren have great respect, and not without reason, for he is a prudent man, upon whom their order chiefly depends, although he gives himself no higher name than that of a simple brother."[1]

He says that during a walk from the Brethren's House to the Church, —

"Müller asked me if I believed that the pains of hell were eternal. To which I answered, 'Just as certainly as the joy of heaven is eternal. How else?' I asked in reply. 'Nay,' said he; 'I do not believe that the soul, which is a part of God's being, can perish eternally.' 'But,' said I, 'I understand that you believe that this part of God's being lies for thousands of millions of years in the punishment of hell, as in a sort of purifying fire. Dear Mr. Müller,' said I, 'you are a benevolent man, but let not your charity extend so far as to wish to extinguish the fires of hell. Remember that there was a great gulf between Abraham's bosom and the rich man's place of punishment, so that no one could go from the one place to the other.' 'Yea,' said he, 'so long as you are evil and I good, we shall never agree, but if we are both good, then we shall well agree. When thirty-

[1] History of New Sweden, by Israel Acrelius. Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, vol. xi. p. 374.

nine [forty-nine] thousand years have passed, the great jubilee comes, when the devil shall be chained.' I understood well whence that came and whither it tended. When we had made the distinction between *aeternitas* (eternity) and *aeviternitas* (a great period), we arrived at the church door, and that was the end of the matter.[1] "

Elsewhere, in describing some of their peculiarities of belief, Acrelius says: "they believe in a purgatory, or purifying fire after death; on which account, also, Father Friedsam at certain times offers prayers for the dead."

The Ephrata Dunkers established a Sunday-school in 1740, which is believed to have been the first Sunday-school established in America. After the battle of Brandywine, during the Revolutionary War, their buildings were seized and used for hospital purposes, and the Sunday-school was then broken up. As late as 1793, James Bolton, one of their number, published a pamphlet, in which he severely censures the "Brethren" for not giving greater publicity to the doctrine of Universal Restoration, asserting that "the German Baptists all believe it."

The other branch of the Dunker church also allowed the publication of books at Germantown, in defence of Universal Restoration. Both De Benneville and Elhanan Winchester were favorably received by them, and preached in their churches in several localities. About 1785, John Ham, an elder in one of their churches in North Carolina, began to preach the doctrine of no future punishment, and, being a man of great talents and of popular address, many converts were made to

[1] Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, vol. xi. p. 387.

his views, chiefly in Virginia and the Carolinas. The church at large became alarmed, and at a council held about that time, they decided against preaching or saying anything in public about the doctrine of Restoration. Subsequently, John Ham and his followers were cut off from the fellowship of the church.

This fact in the history of the Dunkers will explain what otherwise might seem contradictory, that while holding to the doctrine of Universal Restoration, they repel the charge of being Universalists. "If I were to say to my neighbors," said a Dunker preacher, whom the writer once visited, "I have a Universalist preacher stopping at my house, they would say, 'How do you dare to have such a character under your roof?' but if I should say, I have a friend with me who preaches Universal Restoration, they would say, 'Have you? I am glad; I would like to come in and see him!'"

In South Carolina the doctrine of Universal Restoration was preached among the Dunkers with great acceptance, as early as 1780. The circulation of the writings of Rev. William Law was the immediate incitement to energetic discourse on this view of human destiny. Rev. Mr. Martin, a Dunker preacher, became convinced that he ought to preach the doctrine of Universal Salvation in its fulness. Giles Chapman, a Dunker preacher, followed his example in 1782, and soon the entire Dunker congregation became enthusiastic in the belief of Universal Restoration. It was the influence of their zeal, no doubt, which gave occasion for the inquiry of the Synod of the Carolinas to the Presbyterian General Assembly, in 1792 and 1794, as mentioned in the closing section of this chapter.

In the "Annals of Newbury," (S. C.), written by Judge O'Neal, a Baptist, there is the following notice of Giles Chapman: —

"Often have I heard him discourse. He was beyond all doubt an eloquent and gifted preacher, and seemed to be inspired with a full portion of that holy and divine spirit which taught, 'God is Love.' His education and means of information were limited; yet his Mighty Master spake by him, as he did by the fishermen, 'in thoughts that breathe and words that burn.' His ministry was much followed, and in recurring to his spotless life and conversation, his continued zeal to do good, his kind and benevolent intercourse with men, and the meek humility with which he bore the railing of the sects who differed in opinion with him, I have never entertained a doubt that, whether right or wrong in abstract matters of faith and theology, he was indeed a disciple of Him who came into the world to save sinners."

The present membership of the Dunkers is given in "The Record of the Faithful" (1882) as 57,799. Other estimates place their number above 100,000. They are most numerous in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana.

About fifty years ago, Alexander Campbell, founder of the sect known as the Disciples, visited Philadelphia, and attempted to induce the Dunker church in that city to enroll themselves among his disciples, and thus form the nucleus of a larger movement. His proposition was made to Timothy Banger, one of the preachers in the church, an avowed and outspoken believer in Universal Restoration. Mr. Banger replied: —

"We are both for baptism by immersion, and I do not

see any reason why *we* should join *you*, that would not equally require *you* to join *us*."

Mr. Campbell answered, "*You* celebrate the Lord's Supper twice a year, whereas *we* celebrate it every Lord's day."

"That," replied Mr. Banger, "is only increasing the number of times, but does not touch the principle. What do you say concerning the washing of feet? *We* do *that:* do *you?* Besides, *we* hold to the restitution of all things: do *you* ? "

Negative replies sealed the conclusion: "*Our* testimony is altogether the largest and grandest; and vainly you try to argue us into relinquishment of it." [1]

Dr. Benjamin Rush, in "An Account of the German Inhabitants of Pennsylvania," written prior to 1798, says of the Dunkers, "They hold the doctrine of Universal Salvation;" and after mentioning the seceding branch at Ephrata, adds: —

"The Separatists, who likewise dissented from the Dunkers, reject the ordinances of baptism and the sacrament; and hold the doctrine of the Friends, concerning the internal revelation of the gospel. They hold, with the Dunkers, the doctrine of Universal Salvation. The singular piety, and exemplary morality of these sects, have been urged, by the advocates for the salvation of all mankind, as a proof that the belief of that doctrine is not so unfriendly to morals, and the order of society, as has been supposed." [2]

The late Rev. John A. Gurley, while on a journey in the West, in 1839, thus wrote to the "Star in the West" of which he was editor: —

[1] A Century of Universalism, by Rev. Abel C. Thomas, p. 160.

[2] Essays, Literary, Moral, and Philosophical, by Benjamin Rush, M. D., pp. 240, 241.

"On the day following the one I spent in Quincy, I attended an appointment about fifteen miles distant, and delivered a discourse to a very large congregation of Dunkards. I was much pleased with the visit and with the people. Here I became acquainted with Father Wolf, a preacher of the above order, but of our faith in all things relating to the doctrine of the Bible. He is a remarkable man for his powers of reasoning, and is esteemed by those best acquainted with him, as possessing natural powers of mind equal to any in the State. He has preached Universalism more than twenty-five years, and has been the means of converting hundreds, and perhaps thousands. His success in the southern part of the State has been great, and his talents and character command the highest esteem and respect wherever he is known. He preaches to a regular society where he resides, statedly; and his congregations are uniformly large. Great anxiety was manifested by him and his society to hear an eastern preacher; for although old in the faith, they had never listened to one connected with our denomination. They desired to hear for themselves, that they might know of a certainty whether we agreed with them in sentiment. I delivered therefore a doctrinal sermon, to which was given the most fixed attention; and, as I proceeded, I was wonderfully pleased at the appearance of the assembly. Not a word was lost, and each one seemed to say, 'There! that is just what we believe; that is our doctrine. How singular! he preaches precisely like our preachers, and uses the same arguments.' And at the close of the services all seemed satisfied with the sentiments put forth; and Father Wolf assured me that what I had advanced was in perfect harmony with his own belief, and that of his denomination."

III. THE MORAVIANS.

Universalism was also brought to America by the Moravians, who came here in 1735, settling in Georgia, but removing in 1741 to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

Although they closed their church in Oley, Pennsylvania, against Dr. De Benneville, — in consequence, it is alleged, of some differences between them in matters of religious belief, — it is not known that those differences were on the question of destiny. It is possible that there may have been differences among themselves on this question, as few if any of the Moravians of the present day hold to Universalist views. But among those who early settled in America, some were pronounced Restorationists. The views of Count Zinzendorf, their leader, on this subject, are not known; but Peter Bohler, at first pastor at Bethlehem, and afterwards made Bishop of America, next in rank to Zinzendorf, was outspoken in advocacy of Universal Restoration. Rev. George Whitefield, in a letter to Rev. John Wesley, in 1740, says that Bohler "lately frankly confessed in a letter, 'that all the damned souls would hereafter be brought out of hell.'"

Israel Acrelius, whose testimony in regard to the Dunkers at Ephrata, has been cited, gives, in the same volume, an account of a visit to Bethlehem, in June, 1754. In it he relates a conversation with one of the Moravians, William Edmons, the ferryman, who said "that he was assured that no one was so great a sinner that he could not expect forgiveness, and that he also believed that even the traitor Judas was saved.[1]" At

[1] History of New Sweden, p. 417.

Bethlehem he made the acquaintance of "Mr. Ritz," one of the preachers, but he does not record any conversation with him; but concerning him considerable is known. He was a Dane, his full name being Matthew Reuz, as written in the Danish language. By himself it was anglicized into "Rights," but his Universalist cotemporaries spelled it "Wright." "He was educated at the University of Copenhagen; was a man of eminent literary attainments," says the late Rev. Edward Turner, "able to converse, pray, or preach as well in Latin as in his mother tongue. He was a Universalist in his early youth, and used to speak of the affectionate remonstrances of his mother against his heresy."[1] While residing at Bethlehem, he was sent out as a missionary to the Swedish settlers on the Delaware, frequently preaching at Cohansey, Penn's Neck, and Pile's Grove, New Jersey. To his efforts we owe it, no doubt, that Universalist churches were organized in those localities, as early as 1789, if not before that time. He visited New England before 1783, occasionally preaching in Gloucester and Boston, and in 1783 was teaching school in Taunton, Mass.

IV. THE EPISCOPALIANS.

THERE was some Universalism in the Episcopal Church in America, as there also had been for many years in the same church in England.

1. Rev. RICHARD CLARKE, who became rector of St. Philip's Church, Charleston, S. C., in 1754, and remained there till 1759, is said by Ramsay, in his "History of South Carolina" to have been

[1] Universalist Quarterly, vol. vi. p. 11.

"better known as a theologian, beyond the limits of America, than any other inhabitant of Carolina. He was admired as a preacher both in Charleston and London. His eloquence captivated persons of taste; his serious preaching and personal piety procured for him the love and esteem of all good men. When he preached, the church was crowded, and the effects of it were visible in the reformed lives of many of his hearers, and the increased number of serious communicants. His sermons were often composed under the impressions of music, of which he was passionately fond. From its soothing effects, and from the overflowing benevolence of his heart, God's love to man, peace and good will among men, were the subjects on which he dwelt with peculiar delight."[1]

Dalcho, in his "Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church of South Carolina," says that Mr. Clarke "was a Universalist, and appears to have been tinctured with the doctrines of Jacob Boehmen." The "Universalist Theological Magazine," published in London soon after his death, says: "For nearly fifty years he maintained, both by preaching and writing, the doctrine of Universal Restoration."

Bishop Hurd, in his "History of the Rites and Ceremonies of all Religions," speaks of him as the leader in the Philadelphian Church (Jane Lead's organization), and represents Clarke as saying that, this "is a station of great eminence. Though that church has little *strength* in number, splendor, or power, it has the privilege of being beloved and commended above all churches for not denying the name *Jesus*, the SAVIOUR."

What immediate results in spreading Universalism

[1] Ramsay's "History of South Carolina," vol. ii. p. 452.

followed Mr. Clarke's ministry in South Carolina, we do not know; but probably his word was not without effect in converting some to the belief in universal holiness and happiness. By 1789 belief in Universalism was openly avowed in Charleston, and a society of Trinitarian Universalists was organized there some little time afterwards.

In 1759 Mr. Clarke published a pamphlet entitled "A Warning to the World, or the Prophetical Numbers of Daniel and John calculated." It was immediately followed by an anonymous review, "Some Thoughts on the Duration of the Torments of the Wicked, and the Time when the Day of Judgment may be Expected." The reviewer says: —

"A hint is given, p. 21, 'This servant of servants is Satan and his angels, whose days and years of servitude will be double, as shall be more explained hereafter.'

"I do not see that this has been anywhere more explained *after*, as the author promises, but in defect of this, many that heard him will doubtless remember how he explained it *before*, namely, that though Satan's servitude or punishment would be double, yet it would not be endless; but that in some of these ages of the gospel, hell would be abolished, and all fallen creatures be made happy.

"A doctrine this which Mr. C. defended with great zeal; and for the better support of which he has adopted several tenets not contained in, but rather contrary to the word of God. I could wish he had been as cautious in asserting this doctrine from the pulpit as he now seems to be to maintain it from the press; his calculations of harmless figures may possibly have amused and bewildered some people, but the doctrine of the deliverance of the damned (of some even after no very long

space of time), I fear has led many into an awful mistake; and I believe even a Gerhard and Petersen, though they have espoused the same doctrine, would be ready to consider the fixing of the time of release as bordering on presumption" (pp. 4, 5).

In 1762, Mr. Clarke published "A Second Warning to the World," in which, it may be presumed, he took some notice of his reviewer; but neither of his pamphlets has come under our notice.

Mr. Clarke continued his interest in Universalism after his return to England. When Rev. Elhanan Winchester became a Universalist, and preached his sermon, entitled "The Outcast Comforted," to those who had been ejected from the Baptist Church in Philadelphia, for believing in the restitution of all souls, in 1782, Mr. Clarke republished the sermon in London the following year.

2. Rev. Robert Yancey, a native of Louisa County, Virginia, was educated in New Jersey College, and ordained a priest in the Episcopal Church in England, by the Bishop of London, in 1768. He settled in Tillotston and Trinity Parishes, in his native county, where he remained till his death, in 1774, — being cut off by consumption while yet a young man. Not long before his death, perhaps in 1772 or 1773, he became convinced that the Bible taught the doctrine of Universal Salvation, and announced that he would preach a discourse in defence of his new views.

"There was," says the author of a preface to the printed copy of the sermon, "a great gathering of people from the surrounding parishes to hear it. Many in their fanaticism had worked themselves up to the lynching

point, and went provided with ropes and grape-vines to mete out justice to this innovator upon their ancestral religion; little deeming that Luther, Huss, and others were innovators upon still older forms of religion. However, the cogency of his reasoning on his expositions of Scripture, and the mild, persuasive eloquence of his language, convinced many that he was right, and that Scripture had often been perverted. Many went away rejoicing that they had not committed violence on a fellow-being, while others crowded around and congratulated him on his independence and success in openly attacking established dogmas."

The text of this discourse was the words of Job, xxxii. 17: "I said, I will answer also my part, I also will shew mine opinion;" and the theme is thus introduced: —

"Among the many questions which have arisen in the Christian Church, it hath also been one, since the early ages of Christ, whether the punishment of wicked and impenitent men will in the next world be truly endless, or only temporary.

"This question, I am informed, has raised some uneasiness among us of late; wherefore, I have thought it my duty to answer my part, and to show my opinion upon it. I have been sufficiently settled and determined in my own sentiments on this head for a considerable time, but did not apprehend myself obliged in duty to declare them to you, because I looked upon the matter (as I still do) to be of no essential importance to religion and salvation, whichever way it is held. But as I have been sometimes, in public companies and to several individuals, obliged either to declare my opinion or to conceal it in a way which my conscience would not *allow*, and which I thought hardly consistent with that candor, openness, and truth which become a disciple of Christ; and as it has been rumored about, to the disturbance of some minds

who have probably heard the matter wrongly represented, I therefore judged it best to discuss the point fully in public, that every one may hear and judge for himself. And you, my dear brethren and worthy friends, may I not hope, may I not confide, that you will endeavor to arm yourselves with candor, with honesty and humility, on this occasion, and, as well as you can, to divest yourselves of all prejudice, and be disposed to receive the truth in meekness and love to the glory of God our Heavenly Father?

"I suppose the doctrine I shall advance will be new to most of you, and what you have scarcely ever allowed yourselves to think of; and I doubt not but it may surprise and perhaps startle you at first sight, as strange and unheard of things are very apt to do. But upon a more intimate acquaintance with them, we come sometimes as much to admire their beauty and excellency as we at first wondered at their novelty and strangeness. And this I trust will be the case with regard to what I have to offer you this day; which I am the more encouraged to hope, from the trials I have already made with several individuals among you, who are persons of integrity and upright lives, of good sense, and, as I think, of true piety, who were unwilling to believe or assent to any doctrine but that which forced itself upon them by the irresistible evidence of its truth. In short, I do not know that I have failed of success in a single instance, one only excepted, among the many that I have lately talked with upon this subject; which is a consideration that ought to have some weight towards giving you favorable ideas of what I have to say, however strong you may have been in a different persuasion. Think not, my brethren, that I intend to advance such doctrine as will give encouragement to sin. God forbid I should do this, for that would be to fight against him for whose glory I am contending."

After protesting that although disbelieving in the doctrine of eternal suffering, he is far from denying that "the punishments of impenitent sinners will every way equal the strong and terrible representations given in the Holy Scriptures," he adds: —

"The scheme I am proposing, and which divine revelation and reason both assure me is the true one, and the only one that is worthy of God — this scheme, I say, is calculated to represent God in a truly glorious and amiable light, and to kindle our affections and warm our hearts with the most genuine love to him. And tell me, which is the proper nature of the Gospel religion to set us upon serving God, — out of *love* or out of *fear?* Surely, he that serves God only through fear of punishment is a poor servant, and can hardly be acceptable. But he that serves him through love is the true, the faithful, the acceptable servant. Why, then, do men talk of intimidating or awing the world by the preaching of endless punishment, since, if it should succeed, yet it will amount to nothing of true religion? And if the wicked are only to be restrained through fear, the laws of the land might answer that end. But it is evident that the doctrine of endless punishment, whether true or false, answers little or no end with those for whom it is intended, for they do not believe it. Then, how can any other scheme, which does not encourage vice, be worse than that which is not believed, and consequently amounts to little or nothing? But even supposing the wicked should take encouragement from this, and sin with a higher hand, yet it is their own fault, and will prove their misfortune that they do so; and it is not reasonable that the truth, the amiableness of God and the beauty and excellence of the gospel religion should be concealed from others on their account. It is im-

possible for me, under my poor state of health, to take notice in this discourse of all the objections that may be raised. I shall therefore only consider the principal ones, and shall always be ready to obviate any difficulties that may arise to any of you, provided you will be so kind as to let me know them. The first grand difficulty that presents itself to me is that in Matthew xii., concerning the sin against the Holy Ghost, which we are told hath no forgiveness, neither in this world nor the world to come: that is, such sinners are not to expect any mercy, but to suffer the full portion of punishment that so great a sin deserves. Other sinners may in some instances be forgiven, but these must suffer according to their demerits; and thus they have no forgiveness. But this does not by any means imply that their punishment shall have no end. It may have an end two ways, — either by suffering the full demands of that crime, or by the painful expiration of the soul, as the body expires here. There are also great objections raised from the words *forever, everlasting,* and *eternal,* in the Holy Scriptures. It is argued from these forms of expression, that future punishments must be endless. I shall make these two observations concerning these modes of expression in the Holy Scriptures: 1st, that sometimes they are perhaps used to signify an endless duration, but it is evident that at other times they only signify a temporary duration; 2d, if we grant that they always mean an endless duration, yet it will not follow that future punishments are endless."

Having argued these points with ability and learning, he turns his attention to the positive proofs of Universal Salvation: —

"I now proceed to offer you plain, honest words out of the New Testament, — words which show their own

meaning, and have no need of being explained away, to show that Christ is the glorious and universal Saviour; that he shall not finally fail in his undertaking, but hath done his work so effectually that it shall absolutely have the effect intended, which was the salvation of the world, — not a part of the world, but the whole world, as our Lord himself tells us when he says, I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. And can we believe that if this was his errand, the very thing he came down from Heaven for and underwent such scenes of misery, he shall nevertheless be disappointed in his views and his undertaking? If he did come on purpose to save the world, as his own plain words, without the help of explanation, tell us, he cannot fail to accomplish the work, unless it be through some imperfection either in his power or management, either of which is so absurd to suppose, that we must, of necessity, conclude that all that the Father hath given him, which is the whole world, he will bring to salvation and glory in his own way and time; though multitudes, from the miserable sinfulness of their natures, must first pass through great tribulation and infinite scenes of distress, must be sorely tortured and refined in the furnace of anguish and woe, and made meet inhabitants for the fine realms of Heaven."

The Scriptures then adduced are 1st Timothy iv. 10; John vi. 35–40; xii. 32; 1st John iii. 8. Having commented on these, he adds: —

"I could, my brethren, give you a multitude more of quotations from the Holy Scriptures, but my poor share of strength will not allow me to go through with the subject, unless I suppress a great deal that I would willingly speak. I shall therefore only give one more plain text, namely, 'God is love.' Observe here, God is not only loving and benevolent, but he is love itself.

Now, consider the properties of love. Love can do nothing but what is altogether kind, gracious, affectionate, benevolent, and good. How then can love itself create millions of millions — infinitely more than human thought can number — to be in the most extreme torment through an endless duration? The present prevailing systems hold that many more will be lost than saved; and as God must have foreknown before he created man who would be lost and who would be saved (for to suppose him ignorant of this makes him imperfect and destroys the very essence of God), I can no more see how it is possible for him to be love itself, and to create man under these circumstances and upon those terms, than I can conceive how it is possible for any person to delight in punishing those in the severest and most intolerable manner whom he loves with all his soul. It is argued, in defence of this cruel tenet, that when God foresaw the ruin of man, he foresaw the justice of it. But this does not remove my difficulty, which is to understand how it is possible for love itself, — love, which St. Paul says worketh no ill, — to make creatures, when it is foreseen that they will fall into such deplorable ruin and misery, notwithstanding they might justly bring it upon themselves. Had God known that far the greatest part of his precious creatures — his own offspring — would be seduced by Satan and plunged into endless woe, would not love, perfect and entire love, have constrained him to prevent such a rueful event, which certainly he could most easily have done? It is universally granted that God's design in creating man was perfectly benevolent and good. He, being possessed of the fulness of glory and felicity in himself, and being in his very nature love itself, desired to communicate his happiness and goodness to others; and for that end he created different orders of beings that might be capable of enjoying his goodness and beneficence. Among

the rest, he made man; and nothing would have hindered man from answering this blessed end had not the devil seduced and beguiled him into sin. This, in a great measure, prevented man from enjoying that happiness and goodness of God for which he was purposely created, and the devil greatly triumphed in having so far gained his point. Now, shall we suppose that he shall finally prevail, in completing the mischief that God hath suffered him thus far to succeed in? Shall he totally prevent the happiness of the greater part of God's people, and thus totally defeat the design and intention which the God of love had in creating them, insomuch that, instead of their being the glorious partakers of God's happiness and love, as he intended them, they are, by the strange art of Satan, made the most unhappy and miserable, and that to all eternity? Oh! monstrous opinion! the very height of absurdity! Who can believe a thing so inconsistent with the Divine power and goodness? Shall the devil defeat the design of God? If, then, he is the greatest being, possessed of the greatest power, why do we not worship him and call him God?"

In reply to the objection that Universal Salvation is opposed by the justice of God; and that the preaching of it will lead to laxity and sin, he answers:—

"Nor is this at all inconsistent with the justice of God or any of his perfections. We do not pretend to expect a remission of sins or redemption from hell without a most perfect change of nature, so as to make the sinner entirely formed and conformed to the Divine will, which, how hard a thing soever it may be to effect (for it appears next to an impossibility), yet it may be possible with God, for the things that are impossible with man are possible with God. It is certain that nothing that defileth nor worketh abomination shall ever enter the pure regions of heaven. But it appears to me, as well

as to the generality of the most thinking and sensible part of mankind, to be most reasonable to believe that the damned will in some period of duration be reclaimed and reconciled to God, and so made happy. But this is only matter of opinion, which I would by no means desire to force upon any, but most freely allow all the same liberty of thinking for themselves as I desire for myself. But to think thus seems to me to be infinitely more Scriptural and more rational; and if it shall have the same effect upon your hearts that it hath upon mine, I think it will be infinitely worth embracing. I think I can take God to witness that it hath not had the smallest tendency to encourage licentiousness, or any kind of sin in me, but rather gave me glorious and exalted views of God, and forced me to conceive of him as a most amiable and blessed being, who indeed and in truth, is love itself, and has no pleasure in punishing any of his creatures any farther than the same is absolutely necessary and answers a good and happy end.

"Once I looked upon God as an almighty Power, that it was infinitely dangerous to offend, and thought it my duty to love him, because it is commanded in the Scriptures, and because I found that holy men expressed much love to God; and indeed when I saw him represented in so good a light in the Sacred Scriptures, and experienced much of his goodness in my life, I believe I did, in some measure, love him, especially at times. But I must ingenuously confess that when I came to be taught systematical doctrines of God's predestination, reprobation, and making many more to be lost than saved, and that too in endless torture of soul and body in the most inexpressible degree, I could not find out a way to love God so much as I feared him. I desired to love him, but knew not how to do it, for you must know that we cannot love what and whom we please. Consenting to love is not loving. There must be something amiable and

lovely in the person or thing we love. . . . People say they are not fit to be trusted with such doctrine, because it will encourage sin. But I have no opinion of playing the knave for the sake of religion, which I think needs no such art. I have always thought and still think truth the greatest thing in the world, that will make its way and maintain its ground against all opposition, and therefore need not be afraid of being turned loose or thrown at random among the multitude. Upon these principles, I have ventured this strange doctrine among you. I call it strange, though it is neither strange nor new, but has been entertained among men of parts and understanding ever since the early days of the gospel, and able pens have been long since employed in defence of it. But through the means of Popery and other high-flying denominations of Christians, it hath been brow-beaten and kept under; and any man that dared to think but a hair's breadth out of the established channel, was bellowed out upon as a heretic and a mover of sedition among the people; and is it not amazing that the very same principle of Popery, which all so readily agree to condemn and exclaim against, — I mean the principle that ignorance is the mother of devotion and the friend of religion, — I say, is it not very astonishing that those who are so ready to condemn this principle should be found warmly contending for the very same thing themselves? They will not let the people into the true nature of future punishment, lest they make an ill use of it. To do this would be abominable in the papist, but it is prudent and right in themselves; it is necessary for the good government of the people. If I am condemned for violating this beloved principle, in God's name let me be condemned, for I will have nothing to do with the hidden things of dishonesty, but will, through God's help, honestly declare to you what I believe myself to be the truth, unless it be such truth as does not relate to religion, or would not conduce to your happiness."

We need not wonder that these sentiments produced great excitement when they were thus proclaimed. The spirit and temper of the speaker disarmed violent opposition; his feeble physical condition, his near and rapid approach to the grave convinced his hearers of his sincerity, and his arguments produced conviction.

3. Rev. Jacob Duché, famous in American history as having been chosen to offer the first prayer in Congress, in September, 1774, and subsequently so unfortunate as to become a tory, and to lose the friendship of the American patriots, became the assistant minister of Christ Church and St. Peter's in Philadelphia in 1759. As early as 1764, he became a believer in Universal Salvation; Rev. Hugh Neill, then rector of the Episcopal Church in Oxford, Philadelphia County, wrote that at that time, "Mr. Duché was enthusiastic and mystical, a follower of Behmen and William Law." Twenty-five years later, while he was living in London, he was visited by James Pemberton, a distinguished minister of the Society of Friends, who testifies to the same in regard to his religious belief.[1] John Murray mentions Mr. Duché, in 1771, as among the number "who, if they were not fully with me in sentiment, have uniformly discharged toward me the duty of Christian friends."

In a volume of published sermons, Mr. Duché speaks of the atonement, satisfaction, and redemption of Christ as that "all-conquering meekness which must finally extinguish all that is evil in the whole system of things, and leave not one single enemy to God and goodness unsubdued."

[1] Article on Rev. Jacob Duché, in "The Pennsylvania Magazine," vol. ii. pp. 63–72.

4. Rev. Dr. WILLIAM SMITH, Principal and Founder of the University of Pennsylvania, and for many years president of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church, was a Universalist. Mrs. Murray, in her letters from Philadelphia, in 1790, speaks of Dr. Smith and several of the professors of the college, as being regular attendants on her husband's preaching in that city. Dr. Smith is reputed to have been one of the most learned scholars, and eloquent and most popular preachers of his age. No man acted a more influential part in the reorganization of the Episcopal Church, after it became politically independent of the Church of England, than did he. It is generally conceded that he was the leader. "He was on the committee with Dr., afterwards Bishop, White and Dr. Wharton, appointed in 1785, to revise the Prayer-Book, and adapt it to the change of circumstances occasioned by the Revolution. Their revised edition appeared in 1786; Dr. Smith was chairman of the committee and is said to have had the principal agency in the arrangement of the book.[1]"

There are two passages in that book which disclose the Universalism of its author.

"The first was the *omission* of the article of the creed which expresses the belief of *the descent of Christ into hell.* In the 'proposed Prayer-Book' this article was omitted in consequence of its being supposed to express the belief of the existence of a hell of torment, and that Christ went down into that hell. When the omission of this article was objected to by the bishops in England, and the article itself was re-inserted into the creed, it

[1] Annals of the American Pulpit, by William Sprague, D.D., vol v. p. 160.

was only on condition that any church might omit the words 'descended into hell,' or might adopt in their stead, 'went into the place of departed spirits,' — which, say the compilers of the Liturgy, are considered by the church as meaning the same thing as the term, 'descended into hell.'

"There has long been a dispute in the Church of England, and in the Protestant Episcopal Church of this country as to the meaning of the xviith article, concerning '*predestination* and *election*,' — some maintaining that it was intended to assert the Arminian doctrine in respect to these subjects. The first part of the article runs as follows: — 'Predestination to life is the eternal purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) he hath constantly decreed by his counsel, secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation as vessels made to honor. Wherefore they which be endued with so excellent a benefit of God, be called by God's purpose by his spirit working in due season; they through grace obey the calling; they be justified freely; they be made sons of God by adoption; they be made like the image of his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ; they walk religiously in good works; and at length by God's mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity.'

"Now this definition of predestination has been the foundation of long and acrimonious disputes in the Church of England, and in the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States. To such a height did these disputes arise at one time in England that a royal order was issued, commanding all further dispute on the subject to cease, stating that *men of all sorts* (by which it meant, that men of all opinions) do take the article as being in their favor, — and that therefore an article

which has been so ambiguously drawn up as to express the opposite sentiments of Calvin and Arminius shall be no longer the bone of contention between the partisans of the two doctrines.

"There has been a third class of persons who have interpreted the xviith article as expressing the doctrine of Universalism. It will be observed that it is almost a copy of Paul's doctrine with respect to predestination, by which he declares that God hath purposed to gather together in one blessed community all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and in earth. The article being, therefore, mainly in Scripture language, may be interpreted in the sense of Scripture. In whatever sense 'predestination' is used in Scripture, in that sense it is used by some in the Episcopal Church, in the xviith article.

"Dr. Smith, who took the lead, as before stated, in preparing the articles, and in altering them so as to make them express the faith of Episcopalians, proposed that the article should read thus: '*Of Predestination.* — Predestination to life, with respect to every man's salvation, is the everlasting purpose of God, secret to us; and the right knowledge of what is revealed concerning it is full of comfort to such truly religious Christians as feel in themselves the spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of their flesh and earthly affections, and raising their minds to heavenly things,' etc. You will observe here, that the xviith article of the Church of England, as revised and adopted in the 'proposed Prayer-Book,' gave a Universalist interpretation to that article, truly maintaining that predestination to life *is God's everlasting purpose with respect to every man's salvation.* This article, so amended or explained, was unanimously adopted by the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in 1785; and though it was deemed expedient afterwards to relinquish the use of the 'proposed Prayer-Book,' and

to adopt the articles generally, as they had been heretofore contained in the English Prayer-Book, yet the Convention always maintained that they understood them as explained in the proposed book."

The foregoing is copied from an article published in 1839, by the late Rev. Dr. Timothy Clowes, who was for many years in the Episcopal ministry. He adds: —

"It was indeed a most remarkable event in the history of the Protestant Episcopal Church, that she should become, by the alteration of a few words in one of her articles, not only a *tolerator* of Universalism, but a *maintainer* of it. For I can consider this transaction as nothing else than a *unanimous decision*, by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church, that the salvation of *all* men is the everlasting purpose of God."

We quote still further from Dr. Clowes: —

"This proof of the Universalism, of the *secretly* maintained Universalism, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, may be quite as satisfactorily deduced from the circumstance of the unanimous recommendation, by the bishops and clergy and laity of the Protestant Episcopal Church in General Convention, of the two volumes of sermons of the said Dr. William Smith, which sermons are beyond all doubt affirmatory of the doctrine that the punishment of the wicked in a future world will not be endless. And this was not a mere recommendation *once* given, and never afterwards repeated; but the recommendation of these sermons, with all their Universalism, *is still continued.* The Convention has drawn up a body of instructions for the direction of students in divinity, and the sermons of Dr. Smith are among those which are most prominently recommended.

"We have not time at present to make many extracts from these volumes; and, besides, it would not be possible, without several long quotations and comparison of passages, to prove Dr. Smith's Universalism beyond all cavil; for although he was undoubtedly Universalist in his sentiments, and though he means to be understood by the observing part of his readers to teach that sentiment, yet he seems on this subject to adopt such ambiguous terms as to leave the common reader in the dark as to his sentiments. This he would *not* have done, had he been opposed to Universalism, or a believer in its opposite. The Doctor, with many other divines of the Episcopal Church in England and in America, with the adoption of the truth of Universalism, seems to have thought that it was not a *safe* doctrine to be publicly preached. 'The time will come (says Dr. Thomas Burnet) when this doctrine, which is now whispered in the ear, may be proclaimed upon the house-tops; but that time is not yet.' Dr. Smith adopts this sentiment. I will quote, however, one passage, which will make it clearly evident what were his sentiments, and what sentiments the rulers of the Episcopal Church wish to be impressed on the minds of their clergy, if they do not even wish to have them preached to the people at large.

"Dr. Smith, speaking of those who will not return to God, and who die without repentance, says, 'As to those who refuse to return, and will not seek God at all (but continue to put their trust in vanity and lies unto the end), they must lie under St. Paul's curse until *the end* comes; but I do not feel myself prepared to explain that curse, as the good and zealous Dr. Whitby thinks the pious men of old would have done, — extending it beyond the end, and turning it into a prayer "that the Lord would reserve them unto that great day, when he at last shall sit in judgment, in order that, in his own

person, he may smite them with perdition; and that they may perish under his own proper and everlasting curse."

"'My brethren [continues the same Dr. Smith], it has never been accounted heterodox or impious (unless, perhaps, by the most gloomy and Pharisaical bigots) in the divines of our church, or indeed of any other Christian church, to treat freely of such subjects as "the eternity of hell torments, and a universal restitution of degraded and lapsed natures;" and some of our most eminent divines have been considered as rejecting the former and favoring the latter doctrine.'"[1]

An examination of the journals of the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, for 1785 and 1786, shows that the liberal tendency in that body was even more extensive than is noted by Dr. Clowes. The two items of business which engrossed the attention of the session in 1785 were, —

(1) "To consider of and report such alterations in the Liturgy as shall render it consistent with the American revolution and the constitutions of the respective States; and such further alterations in the Liturgy, as may be advisable for this convention to recommend to the consideration of the church here represented, — together with 'An Ecclesiastical Constitution for the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America;'"

(2) "To address the archbishops and bishops of the Church of England, requesting them to confer the Episcopal character on such persons as shall be chosen and recommended to them for that purpose, from the conventions of this church in the respective States."

[1] Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate, Utica, N. Y., 1839, pp. 273–4.

The alterations in the articles and the Liturgy were such as have already been mentioned, and in addition, the omission of the Nicene and Athanasian creeds. The address to the "Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and the Bishops of the Church of England," sets forth the peculiarities of the Constitution of the United States, and the constitutions of the respective States, which forbid the union of ecclesiastical and political affairs, declares the preference of the writers for the "venerable form of Episcopal government," and adds:

"The petition which we offer to your venerable body is, that from a tender regard to the religious interests of thousands in this rising empire, professing the same religious principles with the Church of England, you will be pleased to confer the Episcopal character on such persons as shall be recommended by this church in the several States here represented, — full satisfaction being given of the sufficiency of the persons recommended, and of its being the intention of the general body of the Episcopalians in the said States respectively to receive them in the quality of bishops.

"Whether this our request will meet with insurmountable impediments, from the political regulations of the kingdom in which your Lordships fill such distinguished stations, it is not for us to foresee; we have not been ascertained that any such will exist; and are humbly of opinion, that as citizens of these States, interested in their prosperity, and religiously regarding the allegiance which we owe them, it is to an ecclesiastical source only we can apply in the present exigency."

Having appointed a committee to publish the "proposed Prayer-Book," the Convention adjourned; and again met in Philadelphia, in June 1786. An answer

to their address and petition was received, and contained the following: —

"We are now enabled to assure you, that nothing is nearer to our hearts than the wish to promote your spiritual welfare, to be instrumental in procuring for you the complete exercise of our holy religion and the enjoyment of that ecclesiastical constitution which we believe to be truly apostolic, and for which you express so unreserved a veneration.

"We are therefore happy to be informed that this pious design is not likely to receive any discountenance from the civil powers under which you live; and we desire you to be persuaded that we on our parts will use our best endeavors, which we have good reason to hope will be successful, to acquire a legal capacity of complying with the prayer of your address.

"With these sentiments we are disposed to make every allowance which candor can suggest for the difficulties of your situation; but at the same time we cannot help being afraid, that, in the proceedings of your Convention some alterations may have been adopted or intended which those difficulties do not seem to justify.

"Those alterations are not mentioned in your address, and, as our knowledge of them is no more than what has reached us through private and less certain channels, we hope you will think it just, both to you and to ourselves, if we wait for an explanation.

"For while we are anxious to give every proof, not only of our brotherly affection, but of our facility in forwarding your wishes, we cannot but be extremely cautious, lest we should be the instruments of establishing an ecclesiastical system which will be called a branch of the Church of England, but afterwards may possibly appear to have departed from it essentially, either in doctrine or in discipline."

Whereupon the following was adopted : —

"*Resolved,* That this Convention entertain a grateful sense of the Christian affection and condescension manifested in this letter : And whereas it appears that the venerable prelates have heard, through private channels, that the church here represented have adopted, or intended, such alterations as would be an essential deviation from the Church of England, this Convention trust that they shall be able to give such information to those venerable prelates, as will satisfy them that no such alterations have been adopted or intended."

From this it will be seen that the Convention did not regard their Universalist, and (by implication, in discarding the Nicene and Athanasian creeds and retaining the so-called Apostles' Creed only) their anti-trinitarian avowals, as being any "essential deviation from the Church of England." Then, proceeding to take final action on the proposed "Constitution of the Church," they phrased section ix. as follows : —

"And whereas it is represented to this Convention to be the general desire of the Protestant Episcopal Church in these States, that there may be further alterations of the Liturgy than such as are made necessary by the American revolution ; therefore 'The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and other rites and ceremonies, as revised and proposed to the use of the Protestant Episcopal Church, at a Convention of the said Church in the States of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia and South Carolina,' may be used by the church in such of the States as have adopted or may adopt the same in their particular conventions, till further provision is made, in this case, by the first General Convention which shall

assemble, with sufficient power to ratify a Book of Common Prayer for the church in these States."

As proposed the previous year, this article was simply based on "the desire of the Protestant Episcopal Church;" now it was made emphatic as "the general desire," etc.

The committee "to draft an answer to the letter of the archbishops and bishops of England," Dr. Smith, chairman, reported a draft which was agreed to. The part which bears on the subject of this history was as follows: —

"It gives us pleasure to be assured that the success of our application will probably meet with no greater obstacles than what have arisen from doubts respecting the extent of the alterations we have made and proposed; and we are happy to learn that, as no political impediments oppose us here, those which at present exist in England may be removed.

"While doubts remain of our continuing to hold the same essential articles of faith and discipline with the Church of England, we acknowledge the propriety of suspending a compliance with our request.

"We are unanimous and explicit in assuring your Lordships, that we neither have departed nor propose to depart from the doctrines of your church. We have retained the same discipline and forms of worship, as far as was consistent with our civil constitutions; and we have made no alterations or omissions in the Book of Common Prayer, but such as that consideration prescribed, and such as were calculated to remove objections; which it appeared to us more conducive to union and general content to obviate than to dispute. It is well known that many great and pious men of the Church of England have long wished for a revision of the Liturgy,

which it was deemed imprudent to hazard, less it might become a precedent for repeated and improper alterations. This is with us the proper season for such a revision. We are now settling and ordering the affairs of our church, and if wisely done, we shall have reason to promise ourselves all the advantages that can result from stability and union.

"We are anxious to complete our Episcopal system, by means of the Church of England. We esteem and prefer it, and with gratitude acknowledge the patronage and favors for which, while connected, we have constantly been indebted to that church. These considerations, added to that of agreement in faith and worship, press us to repeat our former request, and to endeavor to remove your present hesitation by sending you our proposed ecclesiastical constitution and Book of Common Prayer.

"These documents, we trust, will afford a full answer to every question that can arise on the subject. We consider your Lordships' letter as very candid and kind; we repose full confidence in the assurances it gives; and that confidence, together with the liberality and catholicism of your venerable body, leads us to flatter ourselves that you will not disclaim a branch of your church merely for having been, in your Lordships' opinion, if that should be the case, pruned rather more closely than its separation made absolutely necessary."

"An adjourned convention" met in October, at Wilmington, Delaware. Another letter was presented from the archbishops and bishops of England.

"It was impossible," they said, "not to observe with concern, that if the essential doctrines of our common faith were retained, less respect was paid to our Liturgy than its own excellence, and your declared attachment

to it, had led us to expect. Not to mention a variety of verbal alterations, of the necessity or propriety of which we are by no means satisfied, we saw with grief that two of the confessions of our Christian faith, respectable for their antiquity, have been entirely laid aside; and that even in that which is called the Apostles' Creed, an article is omitted, which was thought necessary to be inserted, with a view to a particular heresy, in a very early age of the church, and has ever since had the venerable sanction of universal reception. Nevertheless, as a proof of the sincere desire which we feel to continue in spiritual communion with the members of your church in America, and to complete the orders of your ministry, and trusting that the communications which we shall make to you on the subject of these and some other alterations will have their desired effect, we have, even under these circumstances, prepared a Bill for conveying to us the powers necessary for this purpose. It will in a few days be presented to Parliament, and we have the best reasons to hope that it will receive the assent of the Legislature. This Bill will enable the archbishops and bishops to give Episcopal consecration to the persons who shall be recommended, without requiring from them any oaths or subscriptions inconsistent with the situation in which the late revolution has placed them; upon condition that the full satisfaction of the sufficiency of the persons recommended which you offer to us in your address, be given to the archbishops and bishops."

. . . . . .

"But we should forget the duty which we owe to our own church, and act inconsistently with that sincere regard which we bear to yours, if we were not explicit in declaring, that, after the disposition we have shown to comply with the prayer of your address, we think it now incumbent upon you to use your utmost exertions also, for the removal of any stumbling-block of offence

which may possibly prove an obstacle to the success of it. We therefore most earnestly exhort you, that previously to the time of your making such subscription, you restore to its integrity the Apostles' Creed, in which you have omitted an article merely, as it seems, from misapprehension of the sense in which it is understood by our church; nor can we help adding, that we hope you will think it but a decent proof of the attachment which you profess to the services of your Liturgy, to give to the other two creeds a place in your Book of Common Prayer, even though the use of them should be left discretional."

The above being referred to a committee of two from each State, they reported that: —

"Being sincerely disposed to give every satisfaction to their Lordships which will be consistent with the union and general content of the church they represent; and declaring their steadfast resolution to maintain the same essential articles of faith and discipline with the Church of England: —

"Now therefore, the said deputies do hereby determine and declare,

"First, That in the creed commonly called the Apostles' Creed, these words, 'He descended into Hell,' shall be and continue a part of that creed.

"Secondly, That the Nicene Creed shall also be inserted in the said Book of Common Prayer, immediately after the Apostles' Creed, prefaced with the Rubrick [or this]."

On the first proposition, the New Jersey and South Carolina deputies voted aye; the votes of the deputies from New York, Pennsylvania and Delaware, were divided, — the clergy voting aye, and the laity voting no, — and the votes of those States were not counted.

"And so the words are to be restored; there being two ayes, and no negative."

On the question, "Shall the creed commonly called the Athanasian Creed be admitted in the Liturgy of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America?" New York, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina, voted nay. New Jersey and Delaware were divided. "And so it was determined in the negative."

The address of the Convention "To the Archbishops of Canterbury and York," set forth, —

"We have taken into our most serious and deliberate consideration the several matters so affectionately recommended to us in those communications, and whatever could be done towards a compliance with your fatherly wishes and advice, consistently with our local circumstances, and the peace and unity of our church, hath been agreed to."

5. Rev. JOHN TYLER, who became rector of Christ's Church in Norwich, Connecticut, in 1769, and so remained till his death, more than fifty years later, was a Universalist on the Rellyan scheme. He wrote and preached in its defence six sermons, from the text: The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans vi. 23). They were published anonymously, in Boston, in 1798, the volume bearing the title "Universal Damnation and Salvation clearly proved by the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament;" and it is said that he frequently advocated these sentiments in his regular ministrations. In consequence of his making the distinction which John Murray did, between salvation and redemption, he was often misunderstood, and was

sometimes accused of denying the sentiments taught in his writings. But he retained his Universalist views to the last.

Although Mr. Tyler was averse to being known as other than a zealous and loyal Episcopalian, yet his warm personal friendship for Mr. Murray induced him to supply the latter's pulpits in Gloucester, Oxford, and Boston, occasionally. In a pamphlet issued by the First Parish in Gloucester, he is called a "Tory Episcopalian," and is said to be one of the preachers, or "strolling mendicants," with which "this town has been infested."

Mr. Tyler became a Rellyan Universalist as early as 1782, as a letter is now extant, written by him to Rev. Noah Parker, of Portsmouth N. H., dated October 22 of that year, in which he gives his thoughts on certain portions of Scripture mentioned in Mr. Parker's letter of July 1. The following extract will show how intensely Rellyan he had become: —

"As to those words in the parenthesis, contained in the 8th verse of the 17th chapter of Revelations (whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world), I find they stand in the Greek Testament, and appear situated as a parenthesis, and seem naturally to refer to the preceding words, 'they that dwell on the earth;' that is, those inhabitants of the earth whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world shall wonder when they behold the beast. Here it may be said that those who dwell on the earth whose names were not written in the book of life, are not men, but apostate angels. For the devil is the prince of this world, — and Christ took not on him the nature of angels. Therefore the names of

the fallen angels (whose principality is in this world, it seems), cannot be written in the book of life; but Christ took on him that seed of Abraham in whom all the families of the earth are to be blessed. And if they are to be blessed, then certainly it is because their names were written in the book of life; for surely, those are not to be blessed of whom the book of life knows nothing. And Christ is the head of every man: and consequently every man the body of Christ, unless Christ is the head of that which is not his body, which would be an absolute absurdity to suppose. But we being many, are one body in Christ our head; whose members were all written in God's book, we are told. And therefore, there can be no human inhabitants of the earth whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world; for we had grace in Christ before the world was. Can it be that any part of his body who is the head of every man, should not be written in the book of life, when it was so particularly foretold of Christ, that a bone in him should not be broken? Is Christ the head of that which is never to have life? God said, 'I am the God of Abraham,' etc. And said our Lord, he 'is not the God of the dead, but of the living.' So Christ, who is the life, and to whom it is given to have life in himself, cannot be the head of a body that is not known in the book of life; because this would render the new man, made of the twain, Jew and Gentile, extremely imperfect and greatly maimed, — the head finally obliged to take up with much less than half a body, according to the opinion of those who expect the greatest part of human nature will finally be lost. No; Christ is not the living head of a dead body, nor of only half a body; this would be monstrous: but, because he lives we shall live also. And since the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life, of course all men must have their names written in the book of life; unless those are justi-

fied to life, or declared to have a right and title to life, who through neglect were not named in the book of life: and if so, having their names written in the book of life, or not, would be a matter of little or no consequence.

"But in the next place, it may be said, 'whose names were not written in the book of life' refers, agreeable to the common language of Scripture, wholly to the apprehensions of men's own minds. They who dwell on the earth, while unbelievers, have no apprehension of their names being written in the book of life. Their names are not, to them, written in the book of life; to them — to their view — their names do not appear written. As it is said, 'he that believeth not is condemned already.' Condemned by whom? Not by God; for he justifieth the ungodly. It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? for it is Christ that died; yea, rather, that is risen again for our justification. But if God condemneth the unbeliever, how then did the free gift come upon all men unto justification of life? And shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect, — who promised to bless all the families of the earth in the seed of Abraham? He that believeth not is condemned already by whom, then? By his own conscience: because he believeth not the record that God hath given of his Son; and the record is, that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. But he that don't believe this record is condemned already in his own conscience, because he apprehends himself under sentence of death by the law. Therefore, we are justified by faith. Where? In our own minds; for as a man thinketh, so is he. By grace ye are saved, through faith. Saved where? In your own minds; for they who believe, have joy and peace in believing. And this is eternal life to know God, and Jesus Christ. But does this knowledge give a title to life? No; it only discovers what was true before, namely, that God hath given unto us eternal life — in his

Son; and the soul, finding where its life is, begins to participate of it. So those whose names are not written in the book of life, are those who have not yet found where their life is hid; and so, in their view, have not their names written in the book of life. But when they come to know the things that belong to their peace, then will they pass from death to life — their faith will overcome the world. And Christ will then write upon them the name of his God, and the name of the city of his God, New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from his God; and will write upon them his new name, and give them to eat of the hidden manna, and will give them a white stone, and in the stone a new name written from the foundation of the world, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. Thus the Scriptures, if duly attended to, will serve to explain their own meaning; and will prevent our interpretation of any single text in such a manner as to make it directly opposite to the general analogy of the Scripture. But after all that I have said, those words in the parenthesis, 'whose names were not written in the book of life,' etc., appear so uncouthly wedged in, so useless to the sense of the passage, so much like mere human artifice to serve a party design, that my private opinion is, that they never appeared in any of the first copies of the New Testament, but were some man's marginal note; which afterwards was wedged into the text of some later copies, by some ignorant or careless transcriber. And by such means, among others, we have near two thousand variations, long ago discovered, in the several Hebrew and Greek copies of the Old and New Testaments, that have been critically examined. And could I obtain a view of Dr. Kennicott's new translation, I should expect to find (in the column of the variation of copies) that the words of the parenthesis are found in no very ancient copies. I know some will be ready to say that I am so blinded by party prejudices

that I am for expunging from Scripture everything that appears against my favorite tenets. But pray only consider; will not those unbelieving dwellers upon the earth who are afterwards to believe be as likely to wonder, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is, as those unbelievers whose names were not written in the book of life, if such there are? Why should the non-elect unbelievers wonder at the beast, any more than the elected unbelievers? Are the elected unbelievers acquainted with the mysteries of heaven and hell while in unbelief, and only the rest so ignorant as to wonder at them? Surely this can never be supposed. Why then should it be said, 'they that dwell on the earth whose names were not written in the book of life, from the foundation of the world, shall wonder when they behold the beast,' etc.? Will all the unbelievers, then, be non-elected, or reprobates? How uncouth! How many marks of interpolation! The wisdom of God and the wisdom of man can no more agree together than iron and clay can firmly cement and hold equally together, when put to the trial. So that for my part, I can very well read the 8th verse of the 17th chapter of the Revelations without the parenthesis. I have no account of the various readings of the copies of the book of Revelations, but have no doubt that an accurate account of the various readings would set this matter right. Such an account I earnestly wish to see."[1]

In the last sermon in the volume before mentioned, Mr. Tyler makes some statements which show that he was well read in the history of opinions in the Church of England. He says:—

"Methinks I hear an objector to this purpose: 'How comes it to pass that of all the clergy of the Church of

[1] The Ladies' Repository, vol. xxv. pp. 271–272.

England, you are the only one that ever found out that it is the doctrine of the Bible that all men have a title in Christ to eternal life, — that all men will finally be saved? And how does it become you, as a clergyman of the Church of England, to teach a doctrine so contrary to what is, and ever has been taught by that church? So no deference is to be paid to any of her bishops, or the judgment or opinion of any other of her great and learned men, nor indeed to the opinion of the whole Christian church for seventeen hundred years!' I answer, I am not the only one of all the clergy of the Church of England that has found this doctrine in the Bible; and if I was the only one, surely I have a right to preach the gospel, even the truth as it is in Jesus, if I find it, whether I agree with another man or not, unless the authority of men is greater than the authority of God. Certainly, I have no right to preach what I think to be inconsistent with the truth; however, as a clergyman of the Church of England, I have a right to judge for myself of the promises of God, — for the Church of England in the close of her seventeenth article of religion directs thus, even in these very words, 'we must receive God's promises in such wise as they be generally set forth in the Holy Scriptures;' but as she has not told in her articles how God's promises are to be understood, except as they are generally set forth in the Holy Scriptures, she certainly leaves it to me to judge for myself of these promises; and I do judge them to be promises of eternal life to all mankind without exception in Christ Jesus our Lord. And the articles of the Church of England, as I have heretofore taken notice, do set forth the offering of Christ once made as a perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual. Now I ask, if there is perfect satisfaction made by Christ for every sin of the whole world, how justice can ever condemn, or execute the

sentence of the law for sin upon, any one individual of the human race? When a perfect satisfaction is already made to God for all the sins of men, to demand the payment over again is evidently the highest injustice, — as great injustice as it would have been to have punished all mankind with everlasting misery if no one of them had ever sinned. If every sin of the whole world is satisfied for, it is plain and evident that every man must be saved. For what can condemn any man, if the sins of all are satisfied for? If they are not saved, it is plain they can not be punished; but there is no middle way between salvation and damnation; so that you must see the Church of England has in her articles taught the salvation of all men, at least impliedly. And am I to be condemned for differing from all the church clergy in doctrine, because I preach up the doctrines of the thirty-nine articles. Is this a crime, — to preach up the doctrine contained in the articles of the Church of England, — because, it is said, none of the rest teach so, but the contrary? Will the preaching up the doctrine of the Church of England contradict the doctrine of her clergy? This would be a sad thing indeed. Can preaching the doctrine of the Church of England be showing disrespect to her bishops, or great writers, or clergy, who composed the thirty-nine articles? Was it not the bishops and clergy of the Church of England, and was it their doctrine; or did they set forth a doctrine for the Church of England different from their own doctrine? But my teaching that all mankind will finally be happy is not preaching contrary to what is and ever has been taught by all the rest of the clergy of the Church of England. For no less a man than Archbishop Tillotson has been wrote against for preaching this doctrine; and at least in one of his sermons he did intimate that this was his opinion, though at the same time he appeared to be in darkness and doubt about it; and several others of the clergy of the church have taught the

salvation of all men. Mr. Murdon, a church clergyman now living, I suppose, has for a number of years preached the same doctrine as I do, openly and fully, and has printed a book upon the subject; and yet is in full and regular standing under his bishop. Dr. Steed, — a clergyman of the Church of England, who died a few years ago, and was greatly admired as a preacher in most parts of England, — styled by late writers 'the ingenious Dr. Steed,' — in a sermon which he delivered in St. Paul's Cathedral Church in London, speaking upon the redemption, has these words: 'Our Saviour laid down his life for the sins of the whole world; he came that, as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive, — that, as by one man's disobedience many, the many, or mankind in general, were made sinners, treated as such, and made subject to death, the wages of sin, so by the obedience of one many were made righteous.' Again, speaking of Christ, says he, 'The sphere of his beneficence extended backwards to the foundation of the world, and reaches forward to the last conflagration; he became the Saviour of all ages, from the first birth of time to its last period, — the father of mankind, from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same. The blessings of his coming into the world are as extensive as the world, and as lasting as eternity.' Says he, 'Behold the Son of God, pouring forth his blood as well as prayers, even for those that shed it; behold him at once bearing the insults, expiating the sins, and procuring happiness for mankind, till at last he bows his sacred head, and shuts up the solemn scene with these short but comprehensive words, "*It is finished.*" The great, the stupendous work is done; the universal sacrifice, which shall take in all mankind, and which all mankind shall contemplate throughout eternity with awful joy and gratitude, is completed, — the benefit of whose actions and sufferings reaches to all ages, all nations, all mankind. Our Saviour was a

person born for the whole world, for which he died, — a blessing to all mankind from the beginning of time, and whom all mankind will have reason to bless when time shall be no more.'

"You may depend on it that these words were preached in St. Paul's Church in London; so that as a church clergyman I am not teaching a doctrine which is contrary to what is or ever has been taught by all the rest of the clergy of the Church of England. I don't know that I have ever said anything that more strongly points out the salvation of all men than these words of Dr. Steed I have just now recited, though I must confess that in some other passages of his sermons he says what seems inconsistent with those passages I recited; but what I did recite he no doubt said. But I am supposed to differ from the whole body of the Christian church for seventeen hundred years. I answer, this would be a melancholy consideration indeed, if it were true; but can the tradition of the whole body of the Christian church make void the gospel, the everlasting covenant of God's peace? But then, the tradition or opinion of the Christian church, pretty universally, for a thousand years out of the seventeen hundred, has been in favor of popery; therefore if the opinion of the body of the Christian church is a sure proof of what is the true meaning of Scripture, then surely we ought all to become Roman Catholics immediately; for popery has the opinion of the whole body of the Christian church pretty universally in its favor for ten hundred years, and the main body of the Christian church against her for no more than about seven hundred years; and two hundred years of these seven, if the opinion of the whole Christian church had been taken, I strongly suspect that the vote would have turned in favor of popery. If the general opinion of the Christian church is any proof, to determine what is right and true, why are not you all papists? If it is no proof, why is

it alleged against me? The truth concerning the Christian church, I take to be this: the opinion of those that called themselves Christians, almost universally through the world, was in favor of popery till about the year fifteen hundred; since the year fifteen hundred, Christians have been divided into two great classes, being generally Roman Catholics or Protestants, but the Roman Catholics most numerous. From the Apostles' time till the introduction of popery is a period of about four or five hundred years; in which time the general opinion of the bishops and clergy of the Christian church was, — if we believe Dr. Whitby, who was esteemed a great and learned divine of the Church of England, and very profound in his knowledge of antiquity, having spent much time in searching the records of the primitive church, and cannot be supposed to give this account through any prejudice in favor of this doctrine that all men will be saved; for he wrote a considerable treatise against Bishop Tillotson for intimating or hinting in a sermon that all men would finally be saved, — says Dr. Whitby: 'This hath been the constant doctrine of the church of Christ, owned by the Greek and Latin Fathers; among the Greek fathers, Chrysostom, whose words are these, "When the fulness of the Gentiles is come in, then all Israel shall be saved, at the time of Christ's second coming, and the consummation of all things." "They of the people of Israel, who for their unbelief were deserted, that God's mercy might be showed to you, — they shall not always be left in unbelief," says Origen; "but when the dispensation of the fulness of the Gentiles is completed, they also shall find mercy; Israel may then also enter; for if the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, then all Israel shall be saved, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd."' Dr. Whitby adds these words: 'All the Latin Fathers who have left us any commentaries or notes on this epistle, meaning the epistle to the Romans,

are plainly of the same mind; as you may plainly see by consulting Hilary the Deacon, Primasius, Sedutius, and Haymo. From those of the prophet Hosea, — The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an altar, and without an ephod, and without a teraphim: afterwards shall the children of Israel return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall fear the Lord, and his goodness, in the latter days (Hosea, chap. iii. verses 4, 5), — which Saint Augustin produced to prove that the carnal Israelite who now will not believe shall hereafter do so, he saith, "Nothing is more manifest than that by David, their king, the prophet meaneth Jesus Christ, in whom they now believe not." Saint Cyril saith, "Here is a manifest declaration of what shall hereafter happen to the adulterous synagogue, and that she shall be received again, that Israel should not always be rejected, but being recalled and converted again to the faith, should own Christ according to the flesh to be the king of all, and that his glorious grace should be afforded to her to the end of the world." Saint Jerome, having cited those words of Christ, spoken to the barren fig-tree, Let no fruit grow on thee forever (Matt. xxi. 19), he bids us diligently consider that he saith not forever and ever, but only *in seculum*, for that age; and when that age is past, and when the fulness of the Gentiles is come in, then shall this fig-tree bring forth her fruits, and all Israel be saved.' — Dr. Whitby immediately adds these words, 'So generally did this doctrine obtain among the ancients;' and says he, 'This doctrine hath the suffrage of all the ancient Fathers.'

"Now, my hearers, you are able to determine whether by preaching up the salvation of all men, I have departed from the opinion of the whole Christian church for so long a period as seventeen hundred years. I am sure you will throw out of the question the opinion of the

Christian church, when almost swallowed up in popery for a thousand years; then I have the opinion of the whole body of the Christian church, according to Dr. Whitby's account, in favor of the doctrine I preach, for a period of between four and five hundred years, and that immediately after the apostles. But, exclusive of popery, you who may believe that part of mankind perish everlastingly, have the opinion of almost half of the Christian church, I mean the Protestant part, for a period of between two and three hundred years; so that, throwing popery out of the question, the Christian church speak in my favor for about double the time that part of them give their voice in your favor. They give their voice in my favor immediately after the apostles left them; part of them now give their voice in your favor, after forsaking some of the superstitious fears of popery.

"Now, were the primitive Christians as likely to derive errors from the apostles, as the Protestants to derive errors from the Papish Church, out of which they came? Surely not."

That other Episcopal clergymen in Connecticut were in sympathy with Mr. Tyler in his Universalist views, is evident from the fact that, in 1785, Rev. Samuel Peters, A. M., published in London, "A Letter to the Rev. John Tyler, A. M.," concerning the possibility of eternal punishments, and the improbability of universal salvation. He says in the advertisement, or preface:

"The author of the following letter having heard that several of the Episcopal clergy in Connecticut, his much-esteemed friends and fellow-laborers in the Lord, had joined with Mr. Tyler, for whose private use these obser-

vations were primarily intended, was induced to have them printed, that each of his brethren might have a copy at the cheapest rate, a further evidence of his wishes for their spiritual and temporal good."

V. THE CONGREGATIONALISTS.

Among the Congregationalists of New England there was some Universalism prior to 1770, — the date of the arrival of John Murray in America, — and in some localities after his arrival, but wholly independent of him and his theory of redemption.

1. Dr. Charles Chauncy, who graduated from Harvard in 1721, and was ordained pastor of the First Church in Boston in 1727, was distinguished for his learning and patriotism. He became a Universalist some years before making a public avowal of his convictions, though he expressed himself freely to his friends, and submitted to them his writings on the subject.

About the year 1750 he undertook a close and critical study of the Scriptures, particularly of the epistles of St. Paul, in which he closely occupied seven years of the best part of his life. As a result, he came into the belief of Universalism.

"I had no idea of this sentiment," he said, "till I had been gradually and insensibly led into it by a long and diligent comparing of scripture with scripture. For a while, I could not, without considerable difficulty, consult the sacred writings on this point, unrestrained from previously imbibed sentiments. It was with care and pains that I brought myself so far to suspect the truth of

common doctrines, as to be able with tolerable freedom of mind to inquire whether this had a just foundation in the word of God or not. But when I had once disengaged myself from the influence of former notions, so as to be able to look into the Scriptures with a readiness to receive whatever they should teach for truth, it was truly surprising to me to find in them such evident traces of this doctrine."

In 1762 he published a sermon delivered at the ordination of a missionary to the Mohawk Indians. It is entitled "All nations blessed in Christ;" and contains some cautious hints in favor of the doctrine of Universal Salvation. Subsequently he published a work on the "Benevolence of the Deity," containing a few passages on this subject. To these two works he appended his name. Two other and more open avowals and defences of the doctrine were sent out by him anonymously. Of one of these, Rev. John Clarke, D. D., his colleague, in a note to his sermon at the funeral of Dr. Chauncy, Feb. 15, 1787, says: —

"Of the numerous productions of Dr. Chauncy, the most labored, and in his opinion the most valuable, is a work entitled, 'The Salvation of All Men,' published in London, A. D. 1784. This was begun early in life, often reviewed, and completed at a time when the mental powers are most vigorous. Before its publication it underwent a severe examination from those whose theological and critical knowledge qualified them to judge of such a work. Many esteemed it a valuable acquisition to the religious world. And all bestowed the highest encomiums upon the learning and ingenuity of the author. The Monthly Reviewers, also, speak very handsomely of this performance" (p. 28).

In a letter to Rev. Dr. Stiles, May 6, 1768, Dr. Chauncy says: —

"The result of my studying the Scriptures with the above-mentioned helps is a large parcel of materials, fitted to answer several designs. The materials for one design I have put together, and they have laid by in a finished quarto volume for years. This is written with too much freedom to admit of a publication in this country. Some of my friends who have seen it have desired I would send it home for publication, and to have it printed without a name. I question whether it will ever see the light till after my death, and I am not yet determined whether to permit its being then printed, or to order its being committed to the flames. It is a work that has cost me much thought and a great deal of hard labor. It is upon a most interesting subject." [1]

While Dr. Chauncy was in this state of doubt as to what disposition he should make of the manuscript of his larger work, he published, in 1782, his other anonymous production, a small pamphlet, entitled, "Salvation for All Men." It contains a preface, which Dr. Belknap attributes to Dr. Clarke, Dr. Chauncy's colleague. The pamphlet contains little except extracts from several English Universalist writers, and the expression of dislike, if not of contempt, for John Murray, who is described as "a stranger who has *of himself* assumed the character of a preacher." It was written, as its full title declares, to set forth what has been said in favor of this subject by the "pious and learned men who have purposely writ upon it." The pamphlet closes thus: —

[1] Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society. First Series, vol. x., 1809, p. 163.

"It is said, 'Upon supposition of the *truth of universal salvation*, it may yet be *improper* and *hurtful* to open it, as a Scripture doctrine, to the world.' To which I have seen the proper answer in these words: —

"'It would be very *extraordinary*, if setting a *Scripture truth* in its genuine light should have a dangerous tendency. To suppose such a thing would reflect dishonor upon the *revelation* of God. If *final, universal happiness* is a *doctrine of the gospel*, we need not fear its injuring mankind, if they were brought *sincerely* and *universally* to believe it. And indeed, all fear of this kind is founded *ultimately* on *man's wisdom*, in opposition to the *wisdom of God*, which stands in need of no *human art* or *contrivance*, but can, without it, guard mankind against wickedness, and make them good and faithful subjects in the kingdom of righteousness.'

"I shall only add, as a conclusion of these *extracts*, that, if we shall *all*, before the completion of the scheme of God, be crowned with immortality *and honor*, what an argument have we for patience, contentment, and an entire resignation to the divine pleasure, under the numerous trials of this frail, vain, mortal state! And how easily reconcilable are the *sufferings of the world to come* with the wisdom and goodness, as well as justice of God! And how absolutely are all complaints upon this head silenced and refuted! For if we are brought into being *expectants* of a *blessed immortality*, and upon a foundation that will not disappoint us, why then should we find fault with that *discipline*, however *severe*, which may, in true reason, be *morally* connected with the actual *enjoyment* of it? We are upon this plan of things *infinitely obliged* to God, and ought to *love* and *thank* him for our being, notwithstanding all that we may be called to pass through before we are received into *his presence above*, where is *fulness of joy forever*" (pp. 25, 26).

It is quite likely that the publication of the pamphlet was in the way of experiment to determine what would be the fate of his larger work, should it be given to the public.

If this was the case he was not long in suspense, for Revs. Joseph Eckley, Samuel Mather, Timothy Allen, Samuel Hopkins, William Gordon, and Peter Thacher warmly attacked it in responsive pamphlets. Mr. Thacher says that he was impelled to his work by his "Alarm at the progress of the errors which he attempts to refute, and at the patronage afforded them by some distinguished characters in our theological world." Mather dwells at great length on the significance of the words rendered everlasting and forever, arguing that they denote absolute endlessness.

Rev. Dr. John Clarke, in a published "Letter to Dr. Mather," makes this stinging reply: —

"How could you pretend to argue the *endless* punishment of the wicked from the application of the Hebrew word *gnolam*, or the Greek word *aionios*, when you have repeatedly said in private conversation it could be inferred from neither? A minister ought not to have one set of opinions for the closet, and another for the public view. What he asserts among his friends, he ought to maintain openly, or, at least, he ought not to contradict, while there are any alive to detect his indiscretion. You have treated an opponent very unfairly, to offer him arguments, which you *know* have no force in them, and which you have rejected in private conversation."

Eckley's pamphlet was anonymous, the writer styling himself the "Friend to Truth." His argument was that while God desired the salvation of all, and had

offered salvation to all, some would fail of salvation through non-compliance with the conditions. To this Chauncy replied: —

"The offer of salvation being made to *all*, you argue the atonement, upon which that offer is grounded, must be *complete* and *universal*. That is, as you explain yourself, in virtue of the merits and death of Christ, *all men* are in a *salvable state*. This is the *truth*, but not the whole truth. The death of our blessed Saviour rendered the salvation of mankind not only a possible thing, but actually *secured it to them in event*. In a sense, we are all *justified*, *reconciled*, and *saved*. We are born into the world heirs of immortality. And the part assigned us is to acquire such habits, and improve in such graces, as shall fit us for the joys of heaven, at the resurrection day. Hence God is styled 'the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.' In consequence of the merits and sacrifice of Christ, eternal life is secured to every individual; though *believers* only will be *first* partakers of it. Others, who die in their sins must suffer the consequences of their disobedience, and be reduced to a proper temper of mind, before they can be *rationally* and *immortally happy*. But shall they perish forever? God forbid. The Saviour of mankind (according to *your* confession) died for them, in common with others. An atonement is already made for *their* sins. And 'through the obedience of one, the free gift hath come upon *them* to justification of life.' The consequence, therefore, must be, that sooner or later, *they* also will reap the benefits of Christ's mediatorial undertaking.

"This is still further confirmed by the reasoning of St. Paul in the 5th chapter of his epistle to the Romans, 8, 9, and 10th verses. 'But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were sinners, Christ died for us. *Much more* then, being now justified by his blood,

we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, *much more* being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.' This reasoning, upon *my* principles, is strong and conclusive; upon *yours*, I can see no force or pertinence in it. Instead of arguing *a fortiori*, as the apostle intended, you would make him trifle, in a manner unworthy so great a character. If I understand him right, the idea he would convey is this: that inasmuch as God hath taken such an extraordinary step as to deliver up his only begotten Son for the *sinner* and *ungodly*, we may rely on it he will not fail to accomplish his benevolent purposes, even their *final restoration* to favor, and *everlasting salvation.* To illustrate my meaning, let me refer you to the 6, 7, and 8th verses. Having mentioned the *love of God*, the apostle endeavors to set forth the *exceeding greatness* of it from this consideration, — that it was while men were *without strength*, *ungodly*, and *sinners*, that Jesus Christ *died for them.* But, if such was *their* mortal state for whom he suffered, MUCH MORE *shall they be saved from wrath through him.* In virtue of the atoning blood of Christ, these *sinners* and *ungodly* are in a *justified state.* Or, as the apostle expresses himself, these *enemies are reconciled to God.* They are all reduced from that state of *wrath* and *condemnation* to which they were reduced by the fall. God, therefore, being now reconciled to these *sinners*, *enemies*, and *ungodly*, the apostle would teach us to argue that they shall *eventually* be saved by the death of his Son. He would not have taken such measures for the recovery of mankind had he not intended to accomplish their *everlasting salvation.*

"The application is obvious. There is an atonement for sin *complete* and *universal;* and in consequence of it *the free gift has come upon* ALL MEN *to justification and life.* But whatever you understand by this *justification;* whether you include more or less in it, most certainly it

follows from thence that *all men will be finally happy. For they all being justified by his blood,* shall *Much More be saved from wrath through him.* In other words, the *universal redemption,* which *you* allow, *must* issue in the *universal salvation,* for which *I* contend" (pp. 10–12).

In a subsequent edition of his pamphlet, Eckley published an appendix, in which he replied that his reviewer made a mistake in supposing him to hold that God desires the salvation of every individual of the human race in the sense of its being an absolute choice with God, and not simply an object in itself agreeable! Rev. John Murray thus notices Dr. Chauncy's pamphlet, in a letter to Rev. Noah Parker: —

"As for this anonymous advocate for what he calls the *salvation of all men,* or *salvation for all men,* I pity him from my soul; I see he is endeavoring, by seasoning the gospel with a sufficient quantity of fire and brimstone, to render it quite a savory dish for the self-righteous pharisee. He commences by sacrificing to the demon of popular prejudice the obnoxious stranger; a good step this toward preparing the religious world for the reception of his new-fangled gospel, or glad tidings of damnation. I think your remarks on this writer very just; but how ignorant does this reasoner appear of the sentiments of the holy good men whom he introduces! No man on earth can be a greater enemy to the doctrine of the restitution of all things than was Mr. John Wesley; yet this is one of the *holy men* who, this writer affirms, was an advocate for Universal Salvation.

"Yet, in this small pamphlet there are a great many good things. I think the author means well; he sees plainly the Scriptures teach that all men are redeemed, and that consequently all men must finally be saved. He also perceives the difference between the followers

of the Lamb in the narrow way, and the children of this world in the broad way; and that, not only in the present visible state, but in the future invisible state, until the resurrection of the just and the unjust; that the one enters into rest by believing, — dieth in the Lord, and riseth to the resurrection of life. All this he perceives, and all this is sacredly true; but he doth not see that it is the *blood of Jesus* which cleanseth from *all sin*, and that it is not by a very long season of pain and torment that the wretched race are finally brought to love and serve their God and Saviour. He does not view Jesus Christ as completing the destruction of the works of the adversary. Could this poor soul have seen the doctrine held forth in the parable of the tares of the field, he would not have been obliged to look *beyond the end of the world*, to a long season, — God only knows how long, — for that glorious period when the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of God and his Christ." [1]

Dr. Chauncy sent the manuscript of his book to London, where it was published in 1784. It was an octavo volume of 406 pages, and was entitled, "The Mystery hid from Ages and Generations, made manifest by the Gospel-Revelation: or, the Salvation of All Men the grand thing aimed at in the scheme of God, as opened in the New-Testament writings, and entrusted to Jesus Christ to bring into effect."

The first attempt to answer it was from the pen of Rev. Stephen Johnson, of Lyme, Ct., who published against it in 1786 a book of 359 pages, entitled, "The Everlasting Punishment of the Ungodly, illustrated and evinced to be Scripture Doctrine; and the Salvation

[1] Letters and Sketches of Sermons, by John Murray, vol. ii. p. 94.

of All Men, as taught in several late Publications, confuted." It was not a very strong book, and probably had very small circulation and influence. Dr. Chauncy's positions were misstated, probably from a misapprehension of them, and the replies to his arguments were chiefly composed of extracts from other writings of Chauncy published between 1743 and 1776.

Incidentally the book was also attacked in an anonymous pamphlet published in Providence, R. I., in 1786, entitled, "New Sentiments, different from any yet published, upon the Doctrine of Universal Salvation, as connected with doctrines generally approved," by "Adelos."

By far the most able work against it was from the pen of Dr. Jonathan Edwards, published in 1790, — three years after Dr. Chauncy's death: "The Salvation of All Men strictly examined, and the Endless Punishment of those who die impenitent, argued and defended against the Objections and Reasonings of the late Rev. Dr. Chauncy." Several editions of this have been published, the later ones re-enforced by an appendix, added by Rev. Dr. Emmons.

Dr. Chauncy's views as to the method of salvation were peculiarly his own, and save as they may have influenced some in his own denomination, never had any considerable following among believers in universal salvation. Hence Dr. Edwards' attack on them was not considered by Universalists at large as being an attack on Universalism as they held it.

A year after the publication of "The Mystery hid from Ages," Dr. Chauncy published, also in England, "Dissertations on the Fall and its Consequences," to which his name was attached, and to it he caused to be

appended an advertisement of the former work, as "written by the author of the foregoing Dissertations."

2. JONATHAN MAYHEW, who was distinguished through his college course, and graduated with high honors at Harvard in 1744, became pastor of the West Church in Boston in 1747. As early as 1750 he had made for himself so great a name that the University of Aberdeen, Scotland, conferred on him the degree of D.D. Bancroft, in his "History of the United States," pays an eloquent tribute to Mayhew as an early and unwavering friend of the American cause; and probably he was more influential than any other minister in America in producing the American Revolution.

In 1755 he published a volume of sermons, in a note appended to which he vigorously attacked the doctrine of the Trinity, and avowed his belief in the unity of God.

In two thanksgiving sermons, preached and published in 1762, he as plainly declares his belief in Universalism. The theme of the sermons is, *The Nature, Extent, and Perfection of the Divine Goodness.* He thus expresses himself: —

"What shall we say to the doctrine of God's having reprobated a great proportion of mankind; or, from eternity devoted them in his absolute decree and purpose to eternal torments, without any respect or regard to any sins of theirs as the procuring and meritorious cause of their perdition? And this, at the same time, to make manifest and glorify his JUSTICE! What can be said of this; and how shall it be reconciled with the supposition that God's tender mercies are over all his works?

"I will tell you, in a very few words, what I have to say to it at present. And that is, first, that if any persons

really hold such a doctrine, neither any man on earth nor angel in heaven can reconcile it with the goodness of God. And secondly, that I have not the least inclination to attempt a reconciliation of these doctrines; being persuaded that they are just as contrary as light and darkness, Christ and Belial; that one of them is most true and scriptural, joyful to man, and honorable to God; and the other most false and unscriptural, horrible to the last degree to all men of an undepraved judgment, and blasphemous against the God of heaven and earth. Neither is it possible for any man who really believes what the Scriptures teach concerning the goodness of God even to think of this other doctrine but with great indignation."

And he closes the sermon thus: —

"The consideration of God's goodness and mercy, particularly as manifested in the Scriptures, in the redemption of the world by Christ, naturally suggests very pleasing hopes, and a glorious prospect, with reference to the conclusion, or final result of that most wonderful interposition of grace. It cannot be denied that ever since the apostasy of our first parents there have been, and still are, some things of a dark and gloomy appearance, when considered by themselves. So much folly, superstition, and wickedness there is 'in this present evil world.' But when we consider the declared end of Christ's manifestation in the flesh, to give his life a ransom for all, and to destroy the works of the devil; when we consider the numerous prophecies concerning the destruction of sin and death, and the future glory of Christ's kingdom ON EARTH; when we consider that he must reign till he hath put *all* enemies under his feet, the last of which is death — and until he hath subdued *all* things to himself; when we reflect, that according to the apostle Paul, where sin has abounded grace does

much more abound, and that the same creature (or creation) which was originally made subject to vanity is to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God; when we consider the parallel which is instituted and carried on by the same apostle betwixt the first and second Adam, in his epistle to the Romans, and his express assertion in another that, 'as in Adam *all* die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, *but every man in his own order;*' in a word, when we duly consider that there is a certain restitution of *all things,* spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began; when we duly consider these things, I say, light and comfort rise out of darkness and sorrow.

"And we may, without the least presumption, conclude in general that, in the revolution of ages, something far more grand, important, and glorious than any thing which is vulgarly imagined, shall actually be the result of Christ's coming down from heaven to die on a cross, of his resurrection from the dead, and of his being crowned with glory and honor, as Lord both of the *dead* and the *living.* The word of God, and his mercy, endure forever; nor will he leave any thing which is truly his work unfinished. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth,' saith the Lord, 'so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. My word, that goeth forth out of my mouth, shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please; and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I send it.'"

"To conclude, then; let us all, young men and maidens, old men and children, love and honor, extol and obey the God and Father of *all,* whose tender mercies are over all his works; and who has been so gracious and bountiful to ourselves in particular. If we sincerely do thus, as becometh the children of the Highest, we shall, in due time, partake of his goodness, in a far more glorious

manner and measure than we can in the earthly house of this tabernacle. We shall doubtless also have a far more clear, distinct, and perfect knowledge than we can possibly have at present of what is intended in some apparently grand and sublime, yet difficult passages in the sacred oracles, — particularly that of John the Divine, with which I close: 'And *every creature* which is in *heaven*, and on the *earth*, and *under the earth*, and such as are in the *sea*, and *all that are in them*, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever (Rev. v. 13).'"

This was a fearless utterance for that day and place, and stands in marked contrast with the timidity of Chauncy, with whom Mayhew was intimate, and from whom, it may not unwisely be supposed, he received his first hints concerning the fulness of the revelation of the broader hope. It shows a man fearless to advocate what he felt to be truth, no matter how great its unpopularity. The sermons were attacked by Rev. John Cleaveland, and defended by Mayhew. His death occurred shortly after this. Had his life been prolonged, there is no doubt that he would have made himself known as a hearty and devoted advocate of Universal Salvation.

3. Jeremy Belknap, D. D., graduated at Harvard in 1762, and for twelve years pastor of the Federal Street Congregational Church in Boston, has left on record his avowal of belief in Universalism. His correspondence has been published by the Massachusetts Historical Society, and in it are letters which passed between him and Ebenezer Hazard, of Philadelphia. On the publication of Chauncy's pamphlet on "Salvation for All

Men," 1782, Belknap sent a copy to Hazard, who in reply inquires who is the author, and adds: —

"If it is unscriptural, I am too ignorant to be able to see it. I think, however, it does honor to the mercy of the Deity, without doing injury to Divine justice."

Dr. Belknap, in his reply, says: —

"The design of emitting this piece was *good*, but I am not altogether pleased with its execution, because it seems to be an attempt to recommend the doctrine by the force of human authority. . . . However, the truth of the case is this: The doctrine of universal restitution has long been kept as a secret among learned men. Murray has published some undeniable truths concerning it, mixed with a jargon of absurdity; and one Winchester among you has followed his example. . . . As to the doctrine itself, of which you desire my opinion, I frankly own to you, that I have for several years been growing in my acquaintance with it and my regard for it. I wished it might be true long before I saw any just reason to conclude it was so. . . . But at present I do not see how the doctrine can be disproved, if the Scripture be allowed to speak for itself, and the expressions therein used be understood in their natural sense, without any systematical or synodical comments."

4. Joseph Huntington, D. D., was a graduate of Yale College in 1762. He was ordained pastor of the First Church in Coventry, Conn., in 1763, and remained pastor till his death, in 1794.

After his death there was found among his papers a manuscript volume, entitled "Calvinism Improved," which contains a vigorous defence of Universalism, on a theory which differed in little or nothing from old-fashioned Calvinism, except in maintaining that the

Atonement of Christ was commensurate, not only in its nature, but in its design, with the sins of the whole human family.

The volume was published two years after his death, but had a limited circulation, —

"much the greater part of the edition," says Dr. Sprague, "having been consigned to the flames by one of his daughters, — a lady of rare excellence, who loved simple Calvinism better than 'Calvinism Improved,' and whose regard for Orthodoxy seems to have been an overmatch even for her filial reverence."

He adds: "It has been suggested that the book might have been written as a mere trial of polemic skill; but the preface puts it beyond a doubt that it contains his deliberate and matured convictions."

One of the paragraphs in the introduction or preface is,

"The author has often been too precipitate and hasty in many things; but in no wise so in embracing the doctrine here advanced. He is now passing the meridian of life; and this opinion of the way of salvation is the result of his most careful enquiry from the days of his early youth."

Again he says: —

"What now appears is a small part of a system of Divinity which the author has been meditating more than *twenty years*." And again: "I have spent more than twenty years in the most careful reading and attention to everything relating to this subject."

The introduction is without date, and so we have no means of knowing just when the work was completed. Rev. Daniel Waldo speaks of it as a common

thing for Dr. Huntington to raise objections to the doctrine of future punishment, professedly to see how his brethren would answer them; and he adds: —

"I presume there is no doubt that his attention had long been directed to the subject, though it was probably not till a very late period that his views became fixed. Had he lived a little longer, it is quite probable that he would have openly and distinctly avowed them."[1]

The "First Presbytery of the Eastward" published a book against Chauncy's pamphlet, entitled, "Bath Kol, a Voice from the Wilderness, being an humble attempt to support the sinking truths of God against some of the principal errors raging at this time." In the preface we are told that the

"low state of religion, and the awful floods of error, induced the 'First Presbytery of the Eastward,' in session at Windham [Conn.], May 21, 1783, to appoint 'a committee to bring in a draught of a testimony' against these evils; and they were specially directed to begin with Origenism (or the doctrine of Universal Salvation), as lying nearest the root of all the impiety and wickedness now leading the fashion in places of public resort."

So out of a total of 360 pages, 222 are devoted to Universalism. The spirit of the whole may be judged by the manner in which the subject was introduced:

"The first card ever played in the game of catching souls in this snare was by the doctrine of Universal Salvation. The truth of the threatening which God himself had expressly delivered in Paradise, the destroyer dared, in the same Paradise, as expressly to deny. 'Ye shall not surely die, though God has said you shall,' was the

[1] Annals of the American Pulpit, vol. i. p. 606.

first sermon on this subject; it was delivered by the original author of the doctrine" (p. 171).

Alluding to Murray as a zealous disciple of the Rellys, the writer adds: —

"It is true that the Socinian form of this opinion had stolen a passage into this country long before the arrival of the itinerant last mentioned. Some church records, within forty miles of Boston, can show that it was not first imported by him. And it is roundly asserted by many that nothing but a stock of Dr. Burnet's honesty has prevented its being fairly opened up to the world, under the sanction of the name of another Doctor, thirty years ago. Whether the success of the traveller mentioned above awakened a jealousy that the honor of so important a discovery in theology should be carried off by an illiterate stranger, or whether the great fertility of the present aera in the invention of improvements in all departments of learning and science stung the divines now on the stage to emulation, we list not to enquire. One thing is become certain, that no sooner did the author of a pamphlet called 'Salvation for all Men' give the word, than great was the multitude of the preachers that suddenly rose up in almost every quarter, and published it. And, if the best accounts we can obtain deserve credit, this doctrine rings from so many pulpits through the land already, that every minister of the gospel who does not wish it to become universally taught and received is now called on, as he tenders the cause of God and the best interests of souls, to stand forth and openly disavow it" (pp. 186, 187).

It would be interesting if we could know who these persons were who were advocating Universalism "from so many pulpits" about this time, but such information is denied us. We may be sure, however, that the

author of "Bath Kol" did not exaggerate in saying that the doctrines of Universalism were gaining ground, and were especially disturbing some of the Presbyterian congregations.

The Synod of New York and Philadelphia took the following action in 1787: —

"Whereas the doctrine of Universal Salvation and of the finite duration of hell torments has been propagated by sundry persons who live in the United States of America, and the people under our care may possibly, from their occasional conversation with the propagators of such a dangerous opinion, be infected by the doctrine; the Synod take this opportunity to declare their utter abhorrence of such doctrines, as they apprehend to be subversive of the fundamental principles of religion and morality; and therefore earnestly recommend it to all their Presbyteries and members to be watchful upon this subject, and to guard against the introduction of such tenets among our people."

Five years later, action was taken which evinced that the knowledge and belief of Universalism had extended far beyond the New England States: —

"A question from the Synod of the Carolinas was introduced through the Committee of Bills and Overtures, which was as follows; viz., 'Are they who publicly profess a belief in the doctrine of the Universal and actual Salvation of the whole human race, or of the fallen angels, or both, through the mediation of Christ, to be admitted to the sealing ordinances of the gospel?' The Assembly determined that such persons should not be admitted." (1792. Vol. i. p. 64.)

Two years later than this —

"a consideration of Dr. McC.'s letter was resumed. On the first proposition in the letter, requesting a consideration of the sentence of the General Assembly respecting the doctrine of Universal Salvation, passed at Carlisle in 1792, the Assembly *unanimously* agreed to adhere to its aforesaid decision." (1794. Vol. i. p. 94.)

Of course it is not supposed that Dr. Chauncy's pamphlet, or anything proceeding directly from it, wholly accounts for this spread of Universalism. We shall see, at some future time, what other influences and agencies were at work; but it is obvious that it made a great stir, and was influential in some eminent circles.

A singular coincidence was afforded near the close of the last century in four adjoining towns in Western New Hampshire, — five Orthodox clergymen, pastors of four Congregational churches, becoming Universalists, and all save one of them being dismissed for their heresy. Thomas Fessenden, of Walpole, ordained there in 1767, continued pastor till his death, in 1813. In 1804 he published a volume entitled, "The Science of Sanctity," on the 166th page of which is the following: —

"The restitution of all to God and heaven will be in a way consistent with all his divine perfections; he is a just God and a Saviour. All will be his willing people in the day of his power, and some will be saved *so as by fire.*

"When the Son delivers up the kingdom, and is himself subject to the Father, he will retire from government, and return to the state and form of God he was in before his incarnation, full of all the satisfaction, and with all the honor and glory resulting from his beneficial work. He will be as glorious in *giving up* as in receiving the kingdom.

"The advocates for endless sin and misery still continue God's creation and kingdom divided and deranged; God is not and never can be all in all, according to them, to the whole of it. He endures in his creation what is not of his making, and what his soul hates and abhors. An usurping devil is paramount to him in the number of his subjects. Some of them say Christ died only for a few, but all for whom he died will be saved. Others say he died for all, and yet finally will lose most of his redeemed. But neither of them can give a satisfactory reason for the endless duration of sin and misery, nor reconcile it to the benevolence, holiness, wisdom, and even justice of God. Endless punishment cannot be proved to be conducive to God's glory, or the benefit of the righteous, who are perfected by love and not by fear, and confirmed in their happy condition without need of such a spectacle of misery always before them, who issuing from God, they are always, and ever will be, bound to love.

"What hath caused many to deny the salvation of all men is their supposing the general judgment ends the Mediator's reign, and that this life, be it longer or shorter, is the only time of mercy to the spirits and souls God hath made. But these are shown to be mistakes by many able writers on this subject, and to these the reader is referred."

Dr. Davis, in his manuscript volumes of "Biographical Sketches of Congregational Clergymen in New England," says that Fessenden never was suspected of heresy.

Rev. Jacob Mann, ordained and settled at Alstead in 1782, was "dismissed May, 1789, in consequence of his erroneous and unsettled sentiments," having embraced Universalism.

His successor, Samuel Mead, ordained and settled in 1791, was "dismissed in 1797, on account of his unsettled doctrinal views," he having become a Universalist, publishing in 1796 a pamphlet entitled, "A Faithful Hint on the Final Reduction and Restoration of Sinners."

Rev. Dan Foster, pastor of the church in Charlestown, became a Universalist, and published an able book in review of Dr. Strong's "Endless Punishment Consistent with Infinite Benevolence."

Rev. Mr. Taft, of Langdon, also became a Universalist; and Rev. Perley Howe, in Surry, also embraced Universalism, and was dismissed for having departed from the faith. In Rockingham, Vt., separated from Charlestown by the Connecticut River only, Rev. Samuel Whiting, ordained and settled in 1773, became a Universalist, and was dismissed for that reason.

CHAPTER II.

1770–1778.

John Murray, His Birth and early Religious Training. — His first Contact with Universalism. — Examines Mr. Mason's Review of Relly. — Reads Relly's Union. — Hears Relly Preach. — Prayerful Examination of Universalism. — Becomes a Universalist. — Is excommunicated from the Methodists. — Bereavement and Embarrassments. — Mr. Relly's Sympathy and Help. — Comes to America. — Interview with Thomas Potter. — Resists Requests to Preach. — His First Sermon in America. — Preaches in New York. — Is Constantly Employed. — Extent of the Field occupied by him. — Publishes a Rellyan Pamphlet. — Visits Gloucester, Mass. — Characteristics of his Preaching at this Time. — Difficulties and Misunderstandings occasioned by his Course. — Change of Policy. — Chaplain of the Rhode Island Brigade. — Leaves the Army. — Obtains Relief for the Sufferers in Gloucester. — Violent Opposition to him, and he is warned to leave Town. — Political charges against him. — General Greene's Certificate. — Peculiarities of Mr. Murray's Theology. — His Distinction between Salvation and Redemption. — The Distinction sometimes ignored. — Rev. Noah Parker. — Dr. Isaac Davis. — Rev. Adams Streeter. — Rev. Caleb Rich. — Peculiar Theology of the Latter.

JOHN MURRAY, who came to America in 1770, did not seek these shores as affording him a field for missionary operations, but rather to lose himself in the wilds of the New World, and to pass the remainder of his days in obscurity. Born in Alton, England, in 1741, of eminently religious parents,— his father an Episcopalian and his mother a Presbyterian, and both high Calvinists, — he was brought up in the most rigid manner under the influence of a hard theology, frequently experiencing, he says, "the extreme of agony,"

"tortured by the severe unbending discipline of my father, and the terrifying apprehensions of what I had to expect from the God who created me."

When about twelve years of age, the Methodists under the lead of John Wesley, attracted his attention. His father, without giving up his Calvinistic views became a member and class-leader of their society, and young Murray was made the class-leader, by special appointment of John Wesley, of a class of about forty boys. In a few years he became an earnest preacher, and subsequently, having met and heard Rev. George Whitefield, became pronounced in his advocacy of Calvinistic views. For a while, the gay society in which he moved made him indifferent to religious subjects; but entering anew into church relations by becoming a communicant at Whitefield's Tabernacle, in London, he regained his faith and devotion, and was zealous in the discharge of his religious duties.

His attention was first called to the subject of Universalism by an appointment made for him to visit and endeavor to reclaim a young woman of the Tabernacle congregation who had heard and accepted the teachings of James Relly, a Universalist preacher of London.

"Accompanied by two or three of my Christian brethren," he says, "I went to see, to converse with, and if need were, to admonish this simple, weak, but as we heretofore believed, meritorious female. Fully persuaded that I could easily convince her of her errors, I entertained no doubt respecting the result of my undertaking. The young lady received us with much kindness and condescension, while, as I glanced my eye upon her fine countenance, beaming with intelligence, mingling pity

and contempt grew in my bosom. After the first ceremonies we sat for some time silent. At length I drew up a heavy sigh, and uttered a pathetic sentiment relative to the deplorable condition of those who live and die in unbelief. And I concluded a violent declamation, by pronouncing *with great earnestness*, 'He that believeth not shall be damned.'

"'And pray, sir,' said the young lady, with great sweetness, 'pray, sir, what is the unbeliever damned for not believing?'

"'What is he damned for not believing? *Why, he is damned for not believing.*'

"'But, my dear sir, I asked what was that which he did not believe for which he was damned?'

"'Why, for not believing in Jesus Christ, to be sure.'

"'Do you mean to say that unbelievers are damned for not believing there was such a person as Jesus Christ?'

"'No, I do not; a man may believe there was such a person, and yet be damned.'

"'What, then, sir, must he believe in order to avoid damnation?'

"'Why, he must believe that Jesus Christ is a complete Saviour.'

"'Well, suppose he were to believe that Jesus Christ was the complete Saviour of others, would this belief save him?'

"'No, he must believe that Jesus Christ is his complete Saviour. Every individual must believe for *himself that Jesus Christ is his complete Saviour.*'

"'Why, sir, is Jesus Christ the Saviour of any *unbelievers?*'

"'No, madam.'

"'Why, then, should any *unbeliever* believe that Jesus Christ is his Saviour *if he be not his Saviour?*'

"'I say he is not the Saviour of any one until he believes.'

"'Then, if Jesus be not the Saviour of the *unbeliever* until he *believes*, the *unbeliever* is called upon to believe a lie. It appears to me, sir, that Jesus is the complete Saviour of *unbelievers;* and that unbelievers are called upon to believe the truth; and that by *believing, they are saved, in their own apprehension, saved from all those dreadful fears* which are consequent upon a state of conscious condemnation.'

"'No, madam; you are dreadfully, I trust not fatally, misled. Jesus never was, never will be, the Saviour of any unbeliever.'

"'Do you think Jesus is your Saviour, sir?'

"'I hope he is.'

"'Were you *always* a believer, sir?'

"'No, madam.'

"'Then you were once an unbeliever; that is, you once believed that Jesus Christ was not your Saviour. Now, as you say he never *was*, nor never will be, the Saviour of any *unbeliever;* as you were once an *unbeliever*, he never can be your Saviour.'

"'He never was my Saviour till I believed.'

"'Did he never die for you till you believed, sir?'

"Here I was extremely embarrassed, and most devoutly wished myself out of her habitation. I sighed bitterly, expressed deep commiseration for those souls who had nothing but head-knowledge; drew out my watch, *discovered it was late;* and, recollecting an engagement, observed it was time to take leave.

"I was extremely mortified. The young lady observed my confusion, but was too generous to pursue her triumph. I arose to depart; the company arose; she urged us to tarry, — addressed each of us in the language of kindness. Her countenance seemed to wear a resemblance of the heaven which she contemplated. It was stamped by benignity; and, when we bade her adieu, she enriched us by her good wishes.

"I suspected that my religious brethren saw she had the advantage of me; and I *felt* that her remarks were indeed *unanswerable.* My pride was hurt, and I determined to ascertain the exact sentiments of my associates respecting this interview. 'Poor soul,' said I, 'she is far gone in error.' — 'True,' said they; 'but she is, notwithstanding, a very sensible woman.' Ay, ay, thought I, they have assuredly discovered that she had proved too mighty for me. 'Yes,' said I, 'she has a great deal of *head*-knowledge; but yet she may be a lost, damned soul.' — 'I hope not,' returned one of my friends; 'she is a very good young woman.' I saw, and it was with extreme chagrin, that the result of this visit had depreciated me in the opinion of my companions. But I could only censure and condemn, solemnly observing, it was better not to converse with any of those apostates, and it would be judicious never to associate with them upon any occasion. From this period, I myself carefully avoided every Universalist, and most *cordially did I hate them.*"[1]

Not long after this a Mr. Mason, a layman of quite high standing, who had charge of a congregation which met for the purpose of elucidating difficult passages of Scripture, sought an interview with him, and said: —

"'My object in seeking to engage you in private, is to request you would take home with you a pamphlet I have written against Relly's "Union." I have long wondered that some able servant of our Master has not taken up this subject; but, as my superiors are silent, I have been urged by a sense of duty to make a stand, and I have done all in my power to prevent the pernicious tendency of this soul-destroying book.'

"Although, at this period, I had never seen Relly's

[1] Life of Murray, edition of 1870, pp. 146–149.

'Union,' yet my heart rejoiced that Mason, this great and good man, had undertaken to write against it, and, from the abundance of my heart, my mouth overflowed with thankfulness.

"'All that I request of you,' said Mr. Mason, 'is to take this manuscript home with you, and keep it till our next meeting. Meet me in this vestry a little before the usual time. Read it, I entreat you, carefully, and favor me with your unbiassed sentiments.' I was elated by the honor done me, and I evinced much astonishment at the confidence reposed in me. But he was pleased to express a high opinion of my judgment, abilities, and goodness of heart, and he begged leave to avail himself of those qualities with which his fancy had invested me.

"I took the manuscript home, perused it carefully, and with much pleasure, until I came to a passage at which I was constrained to pause, *painfully to pause.* Mr. Relly has said, speaking of the record which God gave of his Son: '*This life is in his Son, and he that believeth not this record maketh God a liar.* From whence,' inferred Mr. Relly, 'it is plain that God hath given this eternal life *in the Son to unbelievers,* as fully as to believers, *else the unbeliever* could not by his *unbelief make God a liar.*' 'This,' said Mr. Mason, *punning upon the author's name,* 'is just as clear as that this writer is an *Irish Bishop.*' I was grieved to observe that Mr. Mason could say no more upon a subject so momentous. Nor could I forbear allowing more than I wished to allow to the reasoning of Mr. Relly. Most devoutly did I lament that the advantage in argument did not rest with my admired friend, Mason; and I was especially desirous that this last argument should have been completely confuted. I was positive *that God never gave eternal life to any unbeliever;* and yet I was perplexed to decide how, *if God had not given life to unbelievers,* they could possibly *make God a liar by believing that he had not.* My mind was incessantly

exercised and greatly embarrassed upon this question. What is it to make any one a liar, but to deny the truth of what he has said? But if God had nowhere said he had given life to *unbelievers*, how could the *unbeliever make God a liar?* The stronger this argument seemed in favor of the grace and love of God, the more distressed and unhappy I became; and most earnestly did I wish that Mr. Mason's pamphlet might contain something that was more rational, more Scriptural, than a *mere pun;* that he might be able to adduce proof positive that the *gift* of God, which is everlasting life, was never *given to any but believers.* I was indisputably assured that I myself was a believer; and right precious did I hold my *exclusive* property in the Son of God.

"At the appointed time I met Mr. Mason in the vestry. 'Well, sir, I presume you have read my manuscript?' — 'I have, sir, and I have read it repeatedly.' — 'Well, sir, speak freely, is there anything in the manuscript which you dislike?' — 'Why, sir, as you are so good as to indulge me with the liberty of speaking, I will venture to point out one passage which appears to me not sufficiently clear. Pardon me, sir, but surely *argument, especially upon religious subjects, is preferable to ridicule, to punning upon the name of an author.*' — 'And where, pray, is the objectionable paragraph to which you advert?' I pointed it out; but, on looking in his face, I observed his countenance fallen; it was no longer toward me. Mr. Mason questioned my judgment, and never afterward honored me by his attention. However, I still believed *Mason right, and Relly wrong;* for if Relly was right, the conclusion was unavoidable, *all men must finally be saved.* But this was out of the question, utterly impossible. All religious denominations agreed to condemn this heresy, to consider it as a damnable doctrine; and what every religious denomination united to condemn must be false.

"Thus, although I lost the favor of Mr. Mason, and he published his pamphlet precisely as it stood when submitted to my perusal, yet my reverential regard for him was not diminished. I wished, most cordially wished, success to his book, and destruction to the author against whom it was written.

"In this manner some months rolled over my head, when, accompanying my wife on a visit to her aunt, after the usual ceremonies, I repaired, according to custom, to the bookcase, and, turning over many books and pamphlets, I at length opened one that had been robbed of its titlepage; but in running it over I came to the very argument which had excited so much anxiety in my bosom. It was the first moment I had ever seen a line of Mr. Relly's writing, except in Mr. Mason's pamphlet. I was much astonished, and, turning to Mrs. Murray, I informed her I held Mr. Relly's 'Union' in my hand. I asked our uncle if I might put it in my pocket. 'Surely,' said he, 'and keep it there, if you please; I never read books of divinity. I know not what the pamphlet is, nor do I wish to know.' As I put it into my pocket, my mind became alarmed and perturbed. It was dangerous; it was tampering with poison; it was like taking fire into my bosom. I had better throw it into the flames, or restore it to the bookcase. Such was the conflict in my bosom. However, in the full assurance that the *elect were safe, and that although they took any deadly thing it should not hurt them,* I decided to read the 'Union;' and, having thus made up my mind, I experienced a degree of impatience until I reached home, when, addressing the dear companion of my youth, I said, 'I have, my dear, judged and condemned before I have heard; but I have now an opportunity given me for deliberate investigation.' — 'But,' returned Mrs. Murray, 'are we sufficient of ourselves?' — 'No, my love, certainly we are not; but God, all-gracious, hath said, "If any lack wisdom, let

them ask of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not." My heart is exercised by fearful apprehensions. This moment I dread to read, the next I am anxious to hear what the author can say. We will, therefore, lay this book before our God. There is, my love, a God, who is not far from every one of us. We are directed to make our requests known unto him for all things, by supplication and prayer. God hath never yet said to any, "Seek ye my face in vain." We will then pray for his direction and counsel, and we may rest in the assurance of obtaining both.' Accordingly we entered our closet, and both of us — for we were both equally interested — prostrated ourselves before God with prayers and tears, beseeching him, the God of mercy, to look with pity on us. We were on the point of attending to doctrines of which we were not, we could not, be judges, and we earnestly supplicated him to lead us into all truth. If the volume before us contained truth, we entreated him to show it to us, and to increase our faith. If, on the other hand, it contained falsehood, we beseeched God to make it manifest, that we might not be deceived. No poor criminal ever prayed for life, when under sentence of death, with greater fervor of devotion than did my laboring soul upon this occasion supplicate for the light of life to direct my erring steps.

"After thus weeping and thus supplicating, we opened the Bible and began to read this book, looking into the Bible for the passages to which the writer referred. We were astonished and delighted at the beauty of the Scriptures, thus exhibited. It seemed as if every sentence was an apple of gold in a picture of silver; and still, as we proceeded, the wonder was that so much divine truth should be spoken by so heinous a transgressor; and this consideration seemed suggested as a reason why I should not continue reading. Can anything good proceed from such a character? Would not truth

have been revealed to men eminent for virtue? How is it possible discoveries so important should never until now have been made, and now only by this man? Yet I considered, *God's ways were in the great deep;* he would send by whom he would send; *choosing* the *weak* and *base* things to confound the *mighty* and the *strong*, that no flesh should glory in his presence. And, as my lovely wife justly observed, I was not sure all I heard of Mr. Relly was true; that our Saviour had said to his disciples, 'They shall say all manner of evil of you *falsely;*' and the present instance may be a case in point. 'You have no personal acquaintance with Mr. Relly,' said she; 'nor do you know that any of those from whom you have received his character are better informed than yourself. I think it doth not *become us to speak or believe evil of any man without the strongest possible proof.*' All this was rational. I felt its full force, and blushed for my own credulity. I proceeded to read. The 'Union' introduced me to many passages of Scripture which had before escaped my observation. A student as I had been of the Scriptures from the first dawn of my reason, I could not but wonder at myself. I turned to Mr. Mason's book, and I discovered want of candor, and a kind of duplicity which had not before met my view, and which perhaps would never have caught my attention had I not read the 'Union.' I saw the grand object untouched, while Relly had clearly pointed out the doctrines of the gospel. Yet there were many passages that I could not understand, and I felt myself distressingly embarrassed. One moment I wished from my soul I had never seen the 'Union;' and the next my heart was enlarged and lifted up by considerations which swelled my bosom to ecstasy. This was the situation of my mind during many succeeding months, and a large proportion of my time was passed in reading and studying the Scriptures, and in prayer. My understanding was

pressing on to new attainments, and the prospect brightened before me. I was greatly attached to my minister, Mr. Hitchins; he was eminent in his line, and a most pleasing preacher. Mrs. Murray was in the habit of taking down his sermons in short-hand. We were delighted with the man, and accustomed to consider him a genuine gospel preacher. It happened that Mr. Hitchins took a journey into the country, and was absent on the Sabbath day. 'Come, my dear,' said I, 'our minister is out of town; let us avail ourselves of the opportunity, and hear the writer of the "Union." This is a privilege which few who read books can have, as authors are generally numbered with the dead before their labors are submitted to the public eye.' Her consent was yielded to my solicitations; but we were terrified as we passed along, in the fear of meeting some of our religious brethren. Happily, however, we reached the meeting-house without encountering any one to whom we were known.

"Mr. Relly had changed his place of worship, and we were astonished to observe a striking proof of the falsehood of those reports which had reached us. No coaches thronged the street, nor surrounded the door of this meeting-house; there was no vestige of grandeur either within or without. The house had formerly been occupied by Quakers. There were no seats save a few benches; and the pulpit was framed of a few rough boards, over which no plane had ever passed. The audience corresponded with the house. They did not appear very religious; that is, they were not melancholy; and I therefore suspected they had not much piety. I attended to everything. The hymn was good, the prayer excellent, and I was astonished to witness in so bad a man so much apparent devotion; for still, I must confess, the prejudices I had received from my religious friends were prevalent in my mind. Mr. Relly gave out his text: 'Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or

the tree corrupt and the fruit corrupt; for every tree is known by its fruit; a good tree cannot bring forth corrupt fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.' I was immeasurably surprised. What, thought I, has this man to do with a passage so calculated to condemn himself? But, as he proceeded, every faculty of my soul was powerfully seized and captivated, and I was perfectly amazed, while he explained *who* we were to understand by the *good*, and *who* by the *bad trees*. He proved, beyond contradiction, that a *good tree* could not bring forth any *corrupt fruit*, but there was no man who lived and sinned not. All mankind had corrupted themselves; there were none, therefore, *good; no, not one.*

"No *mere man*, since the fall, has been able to keep the commandments of God; but *daily* doth break them, in *thought*, in *word*, in *deed*. There was, however, one *good tree*, Jesus. He, indeed, stands as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood. He is that *good tree*, which cannot bring forth *corrupt fruit*. Under his shadow the believer reposeth; the fruit of this tree is sweet to his taste; and the matter of his theme constantly is, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.' I was constrained to believe that I had never, until this moment, heard the Redeemer preached; and, as I said, I attended with my whole soul. I was humbled; I was confounded; I saw clearly that I had been all my life expecting *good fruit* from *corrupt trees, grapes on thorns, and figs on thistles*. I suspected myself; I had lost my standing; I was unsettled, perturbed, and wretched. A few individuals whom I had known at Mr. Whitefield's tabernacle were among Mr. Relly's audience, and I heard them say, as they passed out of the aisle of the church, 'I wonder how the pharisees would like our preacher.' I wished to hear Mrs. Murray speak upon the subject; but we passed on, wrapped in contemplation. At length, I broke silence:

'Well, my dear, what are your sentiments?' — 'Nay, my dear, what is *your* opinion?' — 'I never heard truth, unadulterated truth, before. So sure as there is a God in heaven, if the Scriptures be the word of God, the testimony this day delivered is the truth of God. It is the first consistent sermon I have ever heard.' I reached home full of this sermon; took up the 'Union,' read it with new pleasure; attended again and again upon Mr. Relly, and was more and more astonished. Mr. Hitchins returned home, but, as I conceived, very much changed, — more inconsistent than ever. 'No, my dear,' said my wife, 'it is you who are changed. He preaches, as I can prove by my notes, precisely the same; yet it is truly surprising that his multiplied contradictions have until now passed without our observation.' — 'Well,' said I, 'what are we to do? Can we in future bear such inconsistencies, now that we are better informed? Suppose we keep our seats as usual; attending, however, one-half of every Sabbath to the *preacher of Christ Jesus.*' On this we immediately determined; and, by this expedient, we imagined we might be gratified by hearing the truth, without running the risk of losing our reputation; for we well knew that, as *professed* adherents of Mr. Relly, we could no longer preserve that *spotless fame we delighted to cherish.*

"I now commenced the reading of the Scriptures with augmented diligence. The Bible was indeed a new book to me; the veil was taken from my heart, and the word of my God became right precious to my soul. Many scriptures that I had not known forcibly pressed upon my observation; and many that until now I had not suffered myself to believe. Still the doctrine of *election* distressed me. Unfortunately, I had connected this doctrine of *election* with the doctrine of *final reprobation;* not considering that, although the *first* was indubitably a Scripture doctrine, the *last was not to be found in, nor*

could be supported by, revelation. I determined to call upon and converse with Mr. Hitchins on this important subject. I found him in his study, encompassed about with the writings of great men. 'I wait upon you, sir, for the purpose of obtaining help. The Arminians show me many scriptures which proclaim the universality of the atonement. I cannot answer them. What, my dear sir, shall I do?'—'Why, sir, the doctrines of election and reprobation are doctrines we are bound to believe as articles of our faith; but I can say with the Rev. Mr. Hervey, I never wish to think of them except upon my knees. I never heard any one undertake to explain them, who did not still further embarrass the subject. One observation is, however, conclusive, and it never fails effectually to silence the Arminian: that if, as they affirm, *Christ Jesus died for all men, then assuredly all men must be saved; for no one can be eternally lost for whom the Redeemer shed his precious blood;* such an event is impossible. Now, as the Arminians will not admit a possibility that all will finally be saved, they are thus easily confounded.' This, I thought, was very good; it was clear as any testimony in divine revelation that *Christ Jesus died for all,* for the sins of the whole world, for every man, etc.; and even Mr. Hitchins had declared that *every one for whom Christ died must finally be saved.* This I took home with me to my wife. She saw the truth that we were so well prepared to embrace manifested even by the testimony of its enemies, and we were inexpressibly anxious to hear and to understand. We now attended public worship, not only as a duty, conceiving that we thus increased a fund of righteousness, upon which we were to draw in every exigence, but it became our *pleasure,* our *consolation,* and our *highest enjoyment.* We began to feed upon the *truth as it is in Jesus,* and every discovery we made filled us with unutterable transport. I regarded my friends with *increasing*

affection; and I conceived, if I had an opportunity of conversing with the whole world, the whole world would be convinced. It might truly have been said that we had a taste of heaven below.

"It was soon whispered in the tabernacle that I had frequently been seen going to and coming from Relly's meeting! This alarmed many, and one dear friend conversed with me in *private* upon the subject, heard what, from the abundance of my heart, my mouth was constrained to utter, smiled, pitied me, and begged I would not be too communicative, lest the business should be brought before the society, and excommunication might follow. I thanked him for his caution; but as I had *conversed only with him*, I had hazarded nothing. In a short time I was cited to appear before the society worshipping in Mr. Whitefield's tabernacle. I obeyed the summons, and found myself in the midst of a very gloomy company, all seemingly in great distress. They sighed very bitterly, and at last gave me to understand that they had heard I had become an attendant upon that monster, Relly, and they wished to know if their information was correct. I requested I might be told from whom they had their intelligence; and they were evidently embarrassed by my question. Still, however, I insisted upon being confronted with my accuser, and they at length consented to summon him; but I was nearly petrified when I learned it was the identical friend who had *privately conversed with me, and who had privately cautioned me*, that had lodged the information against me! Upon this friend I had called, in my way to the tabernacle, confiding to him my situation. He said he had feared the event; he pitied me and prayed with me. But he did not calculate upon being confronted with me, and his confusion was too great to suffer his attendance. It was then referred to me: 'Was it a fact, I had attended upon Relly?' I had. 'Did I

believe what I had heard ?' I answered that I did; and my trial commenced. They could not prove I had violated those articles to which I had subscribed. I had, in no point of view, infringed the contract by which I was bound. But they apprehended, if I continued to approbate Relly by my occasional attendance on his ministry, my example would become contagious; except, therefore, I would give them my word that I would wholly abandon this pernicious practice, they must, however unwillingly, pronounce upon me the sentence of excommunication. I refused to bind myself by any promise. I assured them I would continue to hear and to judge for myself; and that I held it my duty to receive the *truth of God* wherever it might be manifested. 'But Relly holds the truth in unrighteousness.' — 'I have nothing to do with his unrighteousness; my own conduct is not more reprehensible than heretofore.' They granted this; but the force of example was frequently irresistible, and if I were permitted to follow, uncensured, my own inclination, others might claim the same indulgence, to the utter perversion of their souls. It was then conceded in my favor, that, if I would confine my sentiments to my own bosom, they would continue me a member of their communion. I refused to accede to this proposal. I would not be under an obligation to remain silent. I must, so often as opportunity might present, consider myself as called upon to advocate truth. The question was then put: Should I be considered a member of the society upon my own terms? And it was lost by only three voices." [1]

Hardly had this happy couple entered upon the joys of their new faith, when Mrs. Murray became a confirmed invalid, and in a short time died. Greatly embarrassed by debts contracted in seeking his wife's restoration to health, Mr. Murray was arrested by his

[1] Life of Murray, edition of 1870, pp. 151–163.

creditors, but by the assistance of his wife's brother was soon released. Deeply crushed by his bereavement, he embarked in business until he was able to discharge all debts, and his pecuniary circumstances were made easy, but his affliction unfitted him for social enjoyment; he had no ambition for worldly gains, but cherished the hope that his departure from life would not be long delayed. His former religious associates deserted him, and he had but one earthly friend from whose society he derived pleasure and comfort. Of him he says: —

"This friend was Mr. James Relly, the man who had been made an instrument, in the hand of God, of leading me into an acquaintance with the truth as it is in Jesus. This kind friend often visited me; and in conversing with him I found my heart lightened of its burden. I could better bear the pitiless storm that beat upon me, when strengthened by the example of this son of sorrow. We frequently conversed upon things of the kingdom, and Mr. Relly, observing my heart much warmed and enlarged by these subjects, urged me to go forth and make mention of the loving-kindness of God. 'No, no,' I constantly replied, 'it is not my design again to step forth in a public character. I have been a promulgator of falsehood.' — 'And why not,' he would interrupt, 'a promulgator of truth? Surely you owe this atonement to the God who hath irradiated your understanding by the light of his countenance.' But no argument he made use of was sufficiently strong to excite in my bosom a single wish that I had either inclination or capability for a character so arduous; my heart's desire was to pass through life, *unheard, unseen, unknown to all, as though I ne'er had been.* I had an aversion to society; and, since I could not be permitted to leave the world, I was solicitous to retire from its noise and its nonsense. I was,

indeed, a burden to myself, and no advantage to anybody else. Every place, every thing served to render me more miserable, for they led my mind to the contemplation of past scenes, — of scenes never more to return. Such was the situation of mind, when, at the house of one of Mr. Relly's hearers, I accidentally met a gentleman from America. I listened with attention to his account of the country in which he had so long resided. I was charmed with his description of its extent, its forests, its lakes, its rivers, its towns, its inhabitants, the liberty they enjoyed, and the peace and plenty which they possessed. I listened to everything with astonishment; and I turned toward the New World my most ardent wishes. I communicated my desire to visit America to my mother, to my brethren. I was ridiculed for entertaining a project so chimerical. What, cross the Atlantic? For what purpose? To whom would I go? What could I do? What object could I have in view? I was unable to answer any of these questions. I had not a single acquaintance in America; indeed, I had no wish to make acquaintance. I had nothing in prospect but a kind of negative happiness. I did not mean to commence a voyage in pursuit of bliss, but to avoid if possible a part of my misery.

"My mind for a considerable time labored with my purpose. Many difficulties interposed. I would infinitely have preferred entering that narrow house which is appointed for all living; but this I was not permitted to do; and I conceived to quit England and to retire to America was the next thing to be desired. Nights and days of deliberation at length convinced my judgment, and I was determined to depart for the New World. My few friends urged me most earnestly to let them apply to those who had connections in America, for letters of introduction or recommendation. No, by no means; this would most effectually defeat my purpose. I would rather not go than go thus. My object was to

close my life in solitude, in the most complete retirement; and with those views I commenced preparations for my voyage." [1]

On the twenty-first of July, 1770, Mr. Murray sailed from Gravesend, in the brig "Hand-in-Hand." After an uneventful voyage, they arrived in Philadelphia early in September, but finding the non-importation agreement in force there, concluded to go to New York, where the agreement had been suspended, that the captain might be able to dispose of his cargo. Misunderstanding the answer given by the captain of a sloop which they spoke, they kept in a course which soon brought them over a bar into Cranberry Inlet, on the New Jersey coast, where they at first feared they were hopelessly grounded, but by removing a part of the cargo to a sloop, the brig was able to recross the bar at the next turn of the tide; but before the sloop could follow, head-winds prevented. As much of the cargo transferred to the sloop was valuable, Mr. Murray had, at the solicitation of the captain of the brig, remained with the sloop. It was now ascertained that the sloop was destitute of provisions, and so, locking up the doors and hatch, Mr. Murray and the crew went on shore to obtain supplies. The result Mr. Murray describes better than any one else could relate it: —

"I went with the boatmen to a tavern, and, leaving them there, pursued a solitary walk through the woods, which seemed to surround this place. My mind was greatly agitated. I was now in the New World; and in just such a part of this New World as had appeared so desirable in prospect. Here I was as much alone as I

[1] Life of Murray, edition of 1870, pp. 186, 187.

could wish, and my heart exclaimed, *Oh that I had in this wilderness the lodging-place of a poor wayfaring man; some cave, some grot, some place where I might finish my days in calm repose!*

"As thus I passed along, thus contemplating, thus supplicating, I unexpectedly reached a small log-house, and saw a girl cleaning a fresh fish. I requested she would sell it to me. 'No, sir, you will find a very great plenty at the next house; we want this.' — 'The next house, what, this?' pointing to one in the woods. 'Oh, no, sir, that is a meeting-house.' A meeting-house here in these woods! I was exceedingly surprised. 'You must pass the meeting-house, sir; and a little way farther on you will see the other house, where you will find fish enough.' I went forward. I came to the door; there was indeed a large pile of fish of various sorts, and at a little distance stood a tall man, rough in appearance, and evidently advanced in years. 'Pray, sir, will you have the goodness to sell me one of those fish?' — 'No, sir.' — 'That is strange, when you have so many, to refuse me a single fish!' — 'I did not refuse you a fish, sir. You are welcome to as many as you please; but I do not sell this article. I do not sell fish, sir. I have them for taking up, and you may obtain them the same way.' I thanked him. 'But,' said he, 'what do you want of those fish?' I informed him that the mariners, who belonged to the sloop at a distance, were at a tavern, and would be glad if I could procure them something for supper. 'Well, sir, I will send my man over with the fish; but you can tarry here, and have some dressed for yourself.' — 'No, sir, it is proper I should see how they are accommodated.' — 'Well, sir, you shall do as you please; but, after supper, I beg you would return, and take a bed with us; you will be better pleased here than at a tavern.' I gratefully thanked him, and cheerfully accepted his offer. I was astonished to see so much genuine politeness and urbanity

under so rough a form; but my astonishment was greatly increased on my return. His room was prepared, his fire bright, and his heart open. 'Come,' said he, 'my friend, I am glad you have returned. I have longed to see you; I have been expecting you a long time.' I was perfectly amazed. 'What do you mean, sir?'—'I must go on in my own way; I am a poor ignorant man; I neither know how to read nor write. I was born in these woods, and my father did not think proper to teach me my letters. I worked on these grounds until I became a man, when I went coasting voyages from hence to New York. I was then desirous of becoming a husband; but, in going to New York, I was pressed on board a man-of-war, and I was taken 'in Admiral Warren's ship to Cape Breton. I never drank any rum, so they saved my allowance; but I would not bear an affront, so if any of the officers struck me I struck them again; but the admiral took my part, and called me his "new-light man." When we reached Louisbourg I ran away, and travelled barefooted through the country, and almost naked to New York, where I was known, and supplied with clothes and money, and soon returned to this place, when I found my girl married. This rendered me very unhappy, but I recovered my tranquillity, and married her sister. I sat down to work; got forward very fast; constructed a saw-mill; possessed myself of this farm, and five hundred acres of adjoining land. I entered into navigation, became the owner of a sloop, and have got together a large estate. I am, as I said, unable either to write or read, but I am capable of reflection. The sacred Scriptures have been often read to me, from which I gather that there is a great and good Being, to whom we are indebted for all we enjoy. It is this great and good Being who hath preserved and protected me through innumerable dangers; and, as he had given me a house of my own, I conceived I could not do less than to open it to

the stranger, let him be who he would; and especially, if a travelling minister passed this way, he always received an invitation to put up at my house, and hold his meetings here. I continued this practice for more than seven years, and, illiterate as I was, I used to converse with them, and was fond of asking them questions. They pronounced me an odd mortal, declaring themselves at a loss what to make of me; while I continued to affirm that I had but one hope: I believed that Jesus Christ suffered death for my transgressions, and this alone was sufficient for me. At length my wife grew weary of having meetings held in her house, and I determined to build a house for the worship of God.

"'I had no children, and I knew I was beholden to Almighty God for everything which I possessed; and it seemed right I should appropriate a part of what he had bestowed for his service. My neighbors offered their assistance. But "No," said I, "God has given me enough to do this work without your aid, and, as he has put it into my heart to do, so will I do." — "And who," it was asked, "will be your preacher?" I answered, "God will send me a preacher, and of a very different stamp from those who have heretofore preached in my house. The preachers we have heard are perpetually contradicting themselves; but that God who has put it into my heart to build this house will send one who shall deliver unto me his own truth, — who shall speak of Jesus Christ and his salvation." When the house was finished, I received an application from the Baptists; and I told them if they could make it appear that God Almighty was a Baptist, the building should be theirs at once. The Quakers and Presbyterians received similar answers. "No," said I, "as I firmly believe that all mankind are equally dear to Almighty God, they shall all be equally welcome to preach in this house which I have built." My neighbors assured me I never should see a preacher whose senti-

ments corresponded with my own; but my uniform reply was, that I assuredly should. I engaged the first year with a man whom I greatly disliked. We parted, and for some years we have had no stated minister. My friends often ask me, "Where is the preacher of whom you spake?" And my constant reply has been, "He will by and by make his appearance." The moment I beheld your vessel on shore, it seemed as if a voice had audibly sounded in my ears, "There, Potter, in that vessel cast away on that shore, is the preacher you have been so long expecting." I heard the voice, and I believed the report; and when you came up to my door and asked for the fish, the same voice seemed to repeat, "Potter, this is the man, this is the person, whom I have sent to preach in your house!"'

"I was astonished, immeasurably astonished, at Mr. Potter's narrative; but yet I had not the smallest idea it could ever be realized. I requested to know what he could discern in my appearance which could lead him to mistake me for a preacher. 'What,' said he, 'could I discern, when you were in the vessel, that could induce this conclusion? No, sir, it is not what I *saw*, or *see*, but what I *feel*, which produces in my mind a full conviction.'

"'But, my dear sir, you are deceived, indeed you are deceived. I never shall preach in this place nor anywhere else.'

"'Have you never preached? Can you say you have never preached?'

"'I cannot; but I never intend to preach again.'

"'Has not God lifted up the light of his countenance upon you? Has he not shown you his truth?'

"'I trust he has.'

"'And how dare you hide this truth? Do men light a candle to put it under a bushel? If God has shown you his salvation, why should you not show it to your fellowmen? But I know that you will. I am sure God

Almighty has sent you to us for this purpose. I am not deceived; I am sure I am not deceived.'

"I was terrified as the man thus went on; and I began to fear that God, who orders all things according to the counsel of his own will, had ordained that thus it should be, and my heart trembled at the idea. I endeavored, however, to banish my own fears, and to silence the warm-hearted man, by observing that I was in the place of a supercargo; that property to a large amount had been entrusted to my care; and that the moment the wind changed I was under the most solemn obligations to depart.

"'The wind will never change, sir, until you have delivered to us, in that meeting-house, a message from God.'

"Still I was resolutely determined never to enter any pulpit as a preacher. Yet being rendered truly unhappy, I begged I might be shown to my bed. He requested I would pray with them, if I had no objection. I asked him how he could suppose I had any objection to praying. The Quakers, he said, seldom prayed; and there were others who visited him who were not in the habit of praying. 'I never propose prayer, sir, lest it should not meet with the approbation of those with whom I sojourn; but I am always pleased when prayer is proposed to me.' I prayed, and my heart was greatly enlarged and softened. When we parted for the night, my kind host solemnly requested that I would think of what he had said. Alas! he need not to have made this request; it was impossible to banish it from my mind. When I entered my chamber and shut the door, I burst into tears. I would have given the world that I had never left England. I felt as if the hand of God was in the events which had brought me to this place, and I prayed most ardently that God would assist and direct me by his counsel. I presented myself before him as a

man bowed down by calamity; a melancholy outcast, driven by repeated afflictions of body and of mind to seek refuge in *private* life; to seek solitude amid the wilds of America. 'Thou knowest,' said my oppressed spirit, 'thou knowest, O Lord, that if it had pleased thee, I would have preferred death as the safest and most sure retreat: but thou hast not seen fit to indulge my wishes in this respect. In thy providence thou hast brought me into this New World. Thou seest how I am oppressed by solicitations to speak unto the people the words of life. Thou knowest that I am not sufficient for these things. Thou God of my fathers, thou God of the stranger, look with pity upon the poor, lonely wanderer now before thee. O thou that sittest in the heavens, and rulest in the earth, and who assurest us that a hair of our head cannot fall unnoticed by thee! — O thou who kindly directest us, thy poor, dependent creatures, to acknowledge thee in all their ways, and to make their requests known unto thee in every time of affliction, behold thy poor dependant, supplicating thee for thy kind direction and protection! If thou hast indeed put it into the heart of thy servant to demand of me, the meanest and weakest of all to whom thou didst ever give power to believe in the name of thy Son, to declare unto him and the people of this place the gospel of thy grace, O God! in mercy prepare me, prepare me for so vast an undertaking, and let thy presence be with me. Strengthen me, O Lord, by thy mighty Spirit. And if it be not thy pleasure thus to employ me, — for thou, O God, wilt send by whom thou wilt send, — graciously manifest thy will, that so I may not by any means be drawn into a snare. Thou art the sinner's friend; thou art the only friend I have. To thee, O thou compassionate Father of my spirit, encouraged by thy gracious promises, I make application. Pity, oh pity, the destitute stranger; leave me not, I most earnestly entreat thee, to my own direction.'

"Thus did I pray, thus did I weep, through the greater part of the night; dreading more than death — even supposing death an object of dread — the thought of engaging as a public character. On the one hand, I discovered that if there be a ruling Power, a superintending Providence, the account given by the extraordinary man under whose roof I reposed evinced its operation; that, if the heart of the creature be indeed in the hand of the Creator, it was manifest that God had disposed the heart of this man to view me as his messenger, sent for the purpose of declaring the counsel of his peace to his creatures. On the other hand, I recollected that the heart is deceitful above all things; that the devices of the adversary are manifold; and that, had it been the will of God that I should have become a promulgator of the gospel of his grace, he would have qualified me for an object of such infinite magnitude. If I testified of Jesus according to the Scriptures, I well knew upon what I must calculate: the clergy of all denominations would unite to oppose me. For I had never met with any individuals of that order, either in the Church of Rome or elsewhere, who were believers of the gospel that God preached unto Abraham, that in Christ Jesus all the families of the earth should be blessed; nor did they, as far as I had known, embrace the ministry of reconciliation committed unto the apostles, namely, that '*God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself,* not imputing unto them their trespasses;' nor did they acknowledge the *restitution of all things, testified by all God's holy prophets ever since the world began.* To these doctrines I supposed clergymen in this, as well as in the country I had left, united in their opposition; and, convinced that there were no enemies in the world more powerful than the clergy, I trembled at the thought of stemming the full tide of their displeasure. I was persuaded that people in general, being under the dominion of the clergy, would hate where they hated, and

report what they reported. Acquainted in some measure with human nature and with divine revelation, I was certain that if I appeared in the character of a real disciple of Christ Jesus, — if I dared to declare the whole truth of God, — all manner of evil would be said of me; and, although it might be *falsely* said, while the *inventor* of the slander would be *conscious of its falsehood*, the majority of those who heard would yield it credit, and I should become the victim of their credulity.

"I knew how Mr. Relly had suffered in England, and the apostles in Judea; and, being a believer in the testimony of God, I was assured if my doctrines were the same my treatment would be similar. All this rose to my view, and the prospect was tremendous. Thus I passed the night, and the ensuing morning witnessed my indisposition both of body and mind. My good friend renewed his solicitations. 'Will you, sir, speak to me and to my neighbors of the things which belong to our peace?' Seeing only thick woods, the tavern across the field excepted, I requested to know what he meant by neighbors. 'O sir, we assemble a large congregation whenever the meeting-house is opened; indeed, when my father first settled here, he was obliged to go twenty miles to grind a bushel of corn; but there are now more than seven hundred inhabitants within that distance.' I was amazed; indeed, everything I saw and everything I heard amazed me. Nothing, except the religion of the people, resembled what I had left behind.

"My mind continued subjected to the most torturing reflections. I could not bring myself to yield to the entreaties of Mr. Potter, and still I urged the necessity of departing the moment the wind would answer. Mr. Potter was positive the wind would not change until I had spoken to the people. Most ardently did I desire to escape the importunities of this good man. The idea of a crowd, making a public exhibition of myself, was to

my desolate, woe-worn mind intolerable; and the suspense in which I was held was perfectly agonizing. I could not forbear acknowledging an uncommon coincidence of circumstances; the hopes and fears of this honest man, so long in operation; yet he evinced great warmth of disposition, and was evidently tinctured with enthusiasm; but, after making every allowance for these propensities, it could not be denied that an overruling Power seemed to operate in an unusual and remarkable manner. I could not forbear looking back upon the mistakes made during our passage, even to the coming in to this particular inlet, where no vessel of the size of the brig 'Hand-in-Hand' had ever before entered; every circumstance contributed to bring me to this house. Mr. Potter's address on seeing me, his assurance that he knew I was on board the vessel when he saw her at a distance, — all these considerations pressed with powerful conviction on my mind, and I was ready to say, If God Almighty has, in his providence, so ordered events as to bring me into this country for the purpose of making manifest the savor of his name, and of bringing many to the knowledge of the truth; though I would infinitely prefer death to entering into a character which will subject me to what is infinitely worse than death; yet, as the issues of life and death are not under my direction, am I not bound to submit to the dispensations of Providence? I wished, however, to be convinced that it was the will of God that I should step forth in a character which would be considered as obnoxious, as truly detestable. I was fully convinced it was not by the will of the flesh, nor by the will of the world, nor by the will of the god of this world; all these were strongly opposed thereto. One moment, I felt my resolution give way; the path pointed out seemed to brighten upon me; but the next, the difficulties from within and without obscured the prospect, and I relapsed into a firm resolution to shelter

myself in solitude from the hopes and fears and the various contentions of men.

"While I thus balanced, the Sabbath advanced. I had ventured to implore the God who had sometimes condescended to indulge individuals with tokens of his approbation, graciously to indulge me upon this important occasion; and that, if it were his will, I should obtain the desire of my soul, by passing through life in a private character. If it were *not* his will that I should engage as a preacher of the ministry of reconciliation, he would vouchsafe to grant me such a wind as might bear me from this shore before the return of another Sabbath. I determined to take the changing of the wind for an answer; and, had the wind changed, it would have borne on its wings full conviction, because it would have corresponded with my wishes. But the wind changed not, and Saturday morning arrived. 'Well,' said my anxious friend, 'now let me give notice to my neighbors.' — 'No, sir, not yet; should the wind change in the middle of the afternoon I must depart.' No tongue can tell, nor heart conceive, how much I suffered this afternoon; but the evening came on, and it was necessary I should determine; and at last, with much fear and trembling, I yielded a reluctant consent. Mr. Potter then immediately despatched his servants, on horseback, to spread the intelligence far and wide, and they were to continue their information until ten in the evening.

"I had no rest through the night. What should I say, or how address the people? Yet I recollected the admonition of our Lord: 'Take no thought what you shall say; it shall be given you, in that same hour, what you shall say.' Ay, but this promise was made to his disciples. Well, by this I shall know if I am a disciple. If God, in his providence, is committing to me a dispensation of the gospel, he will furnish me with matter, without my thought or care. If this thing be not of God he

will desert me, and this shall be another sign; on this, then, I rested. Sunday morning succeeded; my host was in transports. I was — I cannot describe how I was. I entered the house; it was neat and convenient, expressive of the character of the builder. There were no pews; the pulpit was rather in the Quaker mode; the seats were constructed with backs, roomy, and even elegant. I said there were no pews; there was one large square pew, just before the pulpit; in this sat the venerable man and his family, particular friends, and visiting strangers. In this pew sat, upon this occasion, this happy man, and, surely, no man upon this side of heaven was ever more completely happy. He looked up to the pulpit with eyes sparkling with pleasure; it appeared to him as the fulfilment of a promise long deferred; and he reflected, with abundant consolation, on the strong faith which he had cherished, while his associates would tauntingly question, 'Well, Potter, where is this minister who is to be sent to you?' — 'He is coming along in God's own good time.' — 'And do you still believe any such preacher will visit you?' — 'Oh, yes, assuredly.' He reflected upon all this, and tears of transport filled his eyes; he looked round upon the people, and every feature seemed to say, 'There, what think you now?' When I returned to his house, he caught me in his arms. 'Now, now I am willing to depart. O my God! I will praise thee; thou hast granted me my desire. After this truth I have been seeking, but I have never found it until now. I knew that God, who put it into my heart to build a house for his worship, would send a servant of his own to proclaim his own gospel. I knew he would; I knew the time was come when I saw the vessel grounded; I knew you were the man, when I saw you approach my door, and my heart leaped for joy.' Visitors poured into the house; he took each by the hand. 'This is the happiest day of my life,' said the transported man. 'There,

neighbors, there is the minister God promised to send me. How do you like God's minister?' I ran from the company, and, prostrating myself before the throne of grace, besought my God to take me and do with me whatever he pleased. 'I am,' said I, 'I am, O Lord God, in thine hand as clay in the hand of the potter. If thou, in thy providence, hast brought me into this New World to make known unto this people the grace and the blessings of the new covenant; if thou hast thought proper, by making choice of so weak an instrument, to confound the wise; if thou hast been pleased to show to a babe, possessing neither wisdom nor prudence, what thou hast hid from the wise and prudent, — be it so, O Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight. But, O my merciful God! leave me not, I beseech thee, for a single moment; for without thee I can do nothing. Oh, make thy strength perfect in my weakness, that the world may see that thine is the power, and that, therefore, thine ought to be the glory.' Thus my heart prayed, while supplicating tears bedewed my face.

"I felt, however, relieved and tranquillized, for I had power given me to trust in the Lord, to stay upon the God of my salvation. Immediately upon my return to the company, my boatmen entered the house. 'The wind is fair, sir.' — 'Well, then, we will depart. It is late in the afternoon, but, no matter, I will embark directly. I have been determined to embrace the first opportunity, well knowing the suspense the captain must be in and the pain attendant thereon.' Accordingly, as soon as matters could be adjusted, I set off; but not till my old friend, taking me by the hand, said, 'You are now going to New York. I am afraid you will, when there, forget the man to whom your Master sent you. But, I do beseech you, come back to me again as soon as possible.'

"The tears gushed into his eyes, and, regarding me with a look indicative of the strongest affection, he threw

his arms around me, repeating his importunities that I would not unnecessarily delay my return. I was greatly affected, reiterating the strongest assurances that I would conform to his wishes. 'Why should I not?' said I. 'What is there to prevent me? I do not know an individual in New York. No one knows me. What should induce me to tarry there?' — 'Ah, my friend,' said he, 'you will find many in New York who will love and admire you, and they will wish to detain you in that city. But you have promised you will return, and I am sure you will perform your promise. And in the mean time may the God of heaven be with you.' Unable to reply, I hurried from his door; and, on entering the vessel, I found the good old man had generously attended to what had made no part of my care, — by making ample provision both for me and the boatmen during our little voyage.

"I retired to the cabin. I had leisure for serious reflections, and serious reflections crowded upon me. I was astonished; I was lost in wonder, in love, and praise. I saw, as evidently as I could see any object visibly exhibited before me, that the good hand of God was in all these things. 'It is,' I spontaneously exclaimed, 'it is the Lord's doings, and it is marvellous in my eyes.' It appeared to me that I could trace the hand of God in bringing me through a long chain of events, — to such a place, to such a person, so evidently prepared for my reception. And, while I acknowledged the will of God manifested respecting my public character, I at the same moment distinguished the kindness of God evinced by his indulging me with a retirement so exactly suited to my wishes. The house was neat, the situation enchanting; it was on the margin of the deep, on the side of an extensive bay, which abounded with fish of every description, and a great variety of water-fowl. On the other side of this dwelling, after passing over a few fields (which at that time stood thick with corn), venerable

woods, that seemed the coevals of time, presented a 'scene for contemplation fit, towering, majestic, and filling the devotional mind with a religious awe.' I reflected, therefore, with augmenting gratitude to my heavenly Father, upon the pressing invitation he had put into the heart of his faithful servant to give me. And I determined to hasten back to this delightful retreat, where nothing but the grandeur of simple nature exhibited in the surrounding objects, and the genuine operations of the Divine Spirit on the heart of the hospitable master, awaited my approach.

"I had not the least idea of tarrying in New York a moment longer than to see the captain, deliver up my charge, and receive my baggage; and I resolved to return by the first opportunity to my benevolent friend. And thus did I make up my mind. — 'Well, if it be so, I am grateful to God that the business is thus adjusted. If I must be a promulgator of these glad, these vast, yet obnoxious tidings, I shall, however, be sheltered in the bosom of friendship, in the bosom of retirement. I will employ myself on the grounds of my friend, thus earning my own support, and health will be a concomitant; while I will preach the glad tidings of salvation free as the light of heaven.' The business thus arranged, I became reconciled to the will of the Almighty; and I commenced, with tolerable composure, another and very important stage of my various life." [1]

The day of his arrival in New York had not closed before he was importuned by a number of persons to preach for them, — the sailors who accompanied him in

[1] Life of Murray, edition of 1870, pp. 196–212. The arrival of the "Hand-in-Hand" in New York was announced in the "New York Gazette" of Monday, October 1st. The date of Mr. Murray's first sermon in America was therefore Sunday, Sept. 30th, 1770, — the day on which Rev. George Whitefield died.

the sloop having spread the intelligence that he was a preacher. "It became impossible," he says, "to resist their persuasions," and so he delivered his message in the Baptist meeting-house. He was detained in New York more than a week waiting for an opportunity to return to Good Luck, the residence of his new-found friend, Potter; and during that time he "frequently preached, and to crowded houses."

"So soon as an opportunity to return presented, I very cheerfully embraced it; and I felt my heart bound with pleasure at the thought of that meeting which a few days before I would have died to avoid. The charming retreat, in the gift of my friend, was, in my estimation, highly preferable to New York, and all which it could bestow; and I longed most earnestly to quit the one and to return to the other. A number of friends accompanied me to the vessel, and we parted with expressions of regret. A single day produced me again in the abode of genuine, Christian friendship, to which I was welcomed with every demonstration of heart-felt joy.

"Here, then, I considered I had found a permanent home; that a final period was at length put to my wanderings; and, after all my apprehensive dread from being drawn into the public character, now that I had a prospect of sustaining this *public* character in so *private* a manner, I was not only reconciled, but tranquillized and happy. I had leisure to retrospect my past life, and I was filled with astonishment when I beheld all the various paths which I had trod, ultimately leading me to a uniform contemplation of redeeming love; nor could I forbear exclaiming, 'Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are thy ways, O thou King of saints!'" [1]

[1] Life of Murray, edition of 1870, p. 215.

It was impossible, however, for him to enjoy the retirement which he so ardently coveted. The humble meeting-house in which he officiated on Sundays was thronged by people from all quarters, — "some from the distance of twenty miles;" and "multiplied invitations to visit other places," were importunate. At first, he says, —

"I determined I would never accede to any request which should bear me from a seclusion so completely commensurate with my wishes. Alas, alas! how little do we know of ourselves or our destination! Solicitations, earnest solicitations, poured in from the Jerseys, from Philadelphia, and from New York; and it became impossible to withstand their repeated and imposing energy."

The summons to New York seems to have wrought a radical change in his views of duty in regard to entering a larger field.

"To a summons so pressing," he says, "I dared not turn a deaf ear. In fact, a revolution had taken place in my mind. It appeared to me that I was highly reprehensible in thus withdrawing myself from the tour of duty which seemed appointed for me; and I determined never to seek directly or indirectly for an open door, and never again refuse entering any door which Providence should open. It is true, I never wished to receive an invitation; but I was aware that the direction of me and my movements were in the hands of infinite Wisdom."

His reception in New York far exceeded his expectations. The faith which he proclaimed was received with such enthusiasm that a subscription paper for the purpose of erecting a house of worship "was completely filled in one day;" and the believers warmly urged him

to make that city his home. He could not yet bring himself, however, to desert his peaceful retreat at Good Luck; and after a few weeks' service in New York, he returned to his friend Potter. But the open door was now constantly set before him, and, as it was gradually known that he believed more concerning the Divine purpose than was taught by the clergy generally, opposition became manifest; some of his hearers fell away from his meetings, and local reasons for his confining his labors to the Potter meeting-house lost much of their weight. During the next two years, therefore, he was an itinerant in a wide and constantly enlarging field. It extended from Maryland, near Baltimore, on the south, to Portsmouth, N. H., on the north, and included many localities in New Jersey, Newark in Delaware, Philadelphia, New York, Norwich and New London in Connecticut, Newport, East Greenwich, Pawtuxet, and Providence, R. I., and Boston and Newburyport, Mass.

Sometime in 1773 Mr. Murray caused a small pamphlet of James Relly's, sometimes issued as a supplement to the "Treatise on Union," entitled "A Short Specimen of Apostolick Preaching," to be published at Burlington, N. J. It was decidedly Antinomian in its character, describing all human works as foolishness and filthiness, and affirming that the full and complete righteousness of man has already been established in Christ. To defray the expenses of the publication, Mr. Murray was compelled to part with his horse; a loss made good to him by his friends in Newport, R. I., whom he shortly after visited.

On his second visit to Boston, in 1774, he was accused

in the papers published in that city of being a follower of James Relly. This coming to the notice of persons in Gloucester who had perused Relly's "Union," a messenger was despatched to Boston to induce Mr. Murray to visit Gloucester. He obeyed the summons, and remained there nine days.

"I had travelled," he says, "from Maryland to New Hampshire without meeting a single individual who appeared to have the smallest idea of what I esteemed the truth as it is in Jesus; but, to my great astonishment, there were a few persons, dwellers in that remote place, upon whom the light of the gospel had *more than dawned.* The writings of Mr. Relly were not only in their *hands,* but in their *hearts.* Four years previous to this period, an Englishman, a Mr. Gregory, had brought with him those obnoxious pages, and loaned them to this small circle of Gloucesterians, by whom they had been seized with avidity; the Father of their spirits rendered them luminous to their understandings."

Returning to Boston for a short time, Mr. Murray revisited Gloucester in December, and from that time till his removal to Boston, about twenty years later, Gloucester was his home, and the place where most of his ministerial labors were rendered, although he still continued to devote some portions of each year to itinerant service in the wide field already designated.

Up to this time Mr. Murray had seldom, if ever, made a distinct public declaration of his belief in Universalism; nor had he sought in his preaching to make proselytes to his views; and the thought of organizing a sect, or even a society or church, in opposition to the then general belief in Calvinism, had probably never entered his mind. In many places where he

preached the legitimate inferences from his arguments were not fully apprehended either by the preachers or people who flocked to hear him. He remarks concerning this in the account of his first preaching in New York. Of the Baptist preacher, whose house he occupied, he says: —

"Even the minister extended to me the hand of apparent friendship, which I accounted for upon a supposition that he was ignorant of my testimony. I made use of the same Scriptures which he made use of, and he was not apprised that I yielded them unqualified credence. I had no doubt that, so soon as he should be informed that I *believed* what I delivered, he would *condemn* as much as he now seemed to *approve*." [1]

So also in New Jersey: —

"A Baptist minister from New Jersey, believing my sentiments precisely in unison with his own, conceived a strong affection for me. He solicited me to become a member of his church, that I might obtain a license from their association. Of course I declined his friendly offers, for I well knew, when he discovered I really believed the gospel which I preached, uniting with his brethren, he would be as anxious to exclude me from his synagogue as he now was to receive me.

"He pressed me, however, to visit him, which I did, accompanied by my patron, who, to his great mortification, was necessitated to leave me there. In this gentleman's pulpit I preached. I lodged in his house, and received from him every mark of attention, until my unbending refusal of all collections, and the partiality of his friends, visibly diminished his regard. I had calculated upon this change, and it did not therefore astonish

[1] Life of Murray, edition of 1870, pp. 214, 215.

me. He was, however, a warm-hearted man, and as sincere as men in general are. In this place I was introduced to many worthy characters, who, as a part of the election, obtained a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Among the rest was a Justice Pangbrun, a venerable old gentleman, who had for many years been considered by his brethren as an oracle. This gentleman heard me, and discovered that my testimony was not in unison with the teaching to which he had listened. He became sedulously intent upon detecting my errors, and he soon discovered I was wrong, and as soon kindly endeavored to set me right. But as there was no other way of effectuating his wishes but by the Word of God, — for I refused all other authority, — he was soon convinced, upon searching the sacred writings for proofs of my heresy, that it was he himself who had wandered from that precious truth once delivered to the saints. Without hesitation he renounced his former views, and continued ever after an able and zealous advocate for the truth preached by Abraham. It was now noised abroad that I was an erroneous teacher. The clergyman who was so warmly attached to me while he believed me a Calvinistic Baptist, now commenced a most inveterate adversary, and his opposition published more extensively my name and peculiar tenets." [1]

The same was true at Newport and at Providence, as is evident from the inquiries which were submitted to him in those places. At Portsmouth he was invited to become pastor of a congregation of Separatists, evidently under the impression that he was a Calvinist. At Newburyport his patrons, on his first visit, were the personal friends and adherents of the late Rev. George Whitefield; and as Mr. Murray is said to have borne a

[1] Life of Murray, edition of 1870, pp. 222, 223.

strong resemblance to that popular divine, in the animation of his style, and the fresh and copious power of his illustrations, it is probable that they regarded him as in some sort a successor to Whitefield. Certainly they did not understand that he was a Universalist, for, concerning his second visit to Newburyport and Portsmouth, Mrs. Murray says: —

"Those who adhered to him in those towns, having ascertained that he absolutely believed the final restitution of all things, united with the many in the most unqualified censure." [1]

No doubt he was honest and sincere in adopting this course, but it involved him in many difficulties, and caused suspicion, and in some cases great indignation. He makes a frank statement of his method, and manifestly with entire self-approval: —

"The grace, union, and membership upon which I expatiated, were admitted by every Calvinist, but admitted only for the *elect;* and when I repeated those glorious texts of Scripture which indisputably proclaim the redemption of the lost world, as I did not expressly say, My brethren, I receive these texts in the unlimited sense in which they are given, they were not apprised that I did not read them with the same contracted views to which they had been accustomed. When they became assured of the magnitude and unbounded result which I ascribed to the birth, life, and death of the Redeemer, their doors were fast closed against me. For myself, I was in unison with Mr. Relly, who supposed the *gradual* dawn of light would *eventually* prove more beneficial to mankind than the sudden burst of meridian day. Thus I was contented with proclaiming the truth as it is in

[1] Life of Murray, edition of 1870, p. 312.

Jesus in Scripture language only, — leaving to my hearers deductions, comments, and applications." [1]

Elsewhere he alludes to his custom of answering inquiries in Scripture language, and manifests surprise that it has not been deemed satisfactory : —

"One capital difficulty which has encompassed me in my progress through this younger world, has been the extreme reluctance of inquirers to receive their answers in Scripture language. Standing alone, I have sought to wrap myself, or rather to intrench myself, in the sacred testimony of my God ; and for this I have been accused of prevarication, equivocation, and what not, merely because I have not generally chosen to garb my sentiments in my own words. For example : the interrogator commences with a great many compliments, and then follows, — 'Do you believe all men will finally be saved ?' — '*I believe it is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*' — 'But do *you yourself* believe that all mankind will finally be saved ?' — '*God hath included all in unbelief that he may have mercy upon all.*' — 'But will *all* be finally saved ?' — '*God hath spoken of the restitution of all things, by the mouth of all his holy prophets, since the world began.*' — 'But still you do not answer my question.' — 'Why, sir, for anything I know, the authors I have cited mean by their words precisely the same as I do. I adopt their language because I conceive it expresses my own ideas better than any set of phrases I could press into my service.' This mode, however, has rarely given satisfaction. Persons dare not, in an unqualified manner, deny the validity of Scripture testimony. They can only assert it does not *mean as it speaks*, and they earnestly repeat the question, 'Do you

[1] Life of Murray, edition of 1870, pp. 287, 288.

believe,' etc., etc. While my responses are drawn from the sacred streams flowing in the book of God, from Genesis to Revelation, still they importunately, sometimes clamorously, demand, 'But do you take those Scriptures as they are spoken?' To which I can only reply, 'I have no reason to believe that, by *saying one thing and meaning another*, men, so upright, have formed a plan to deceive me.' An attempt has then been made to prove the texts in question did not, could not, mean as they spake. To which I have answered, 'Multitudes are on your side. Many have labored to prove God a liar; but I have never yet heard any argument sufficiently potent to convince me that he is so.'" [1]

In 1776 Rev. John Cleaveland, pastor of the Second Church in Ipswich, Mass., published a pamphlet, the long title to which commences, "An Attempt to Nip in the Bud the Unscriptural Doctrine of Universal Salvation." In it he styles Murray a "false teacher," and says: —

"It may also be affirmed to be an infallible mark of a false teacher, if at his first coming into a strange place, it is his practice to make use of such language only or forms of speech as he understands convey to them orthodox sentiments until he has gained their affections, and then, by little and little, as he finds it will bear, to divulge his corrupt tenets in language directly contrary to what he used at first" (p. 19).

Rev. Ezra Stiles, D.D., in a letter to Rev. Eli Forbes, of Gloucester, in 1777, declared that Mr. Murray once positively denied to him his belief in universal salvation, "and asserted both the reality and perpetuity of the future misery and damnation of those of the human

[1] Life of Murray, edition of 1870, pp. 292, 293.

race who should be found on the left hand of Jesus; and he said a number of mankind would be found on the left hand of Jesus at the great day." [1] Mr. Murray pronounced the declaration an unqualified falsehood, and made a journey to Portsmouth for the purpose of confronting Dr. Stiles with the denial, but was refused an interview.[2]

Under the stimulus of sympathy in Gloucester, Mr. Murray's policy was entirely changed, and from this time onward his preaching was more positive and bold. On the breaking out of the War for Independence he was importuned by Generals Varnum and Greene, two of his East Greenwich friends, to take the chaplaincy of the Rhode Island Brigade, then encamped at Cambridge, Mass. He accepted, and entered upon his duties, but was at once confronted by an effort for his removal made by the army chaplains, who united in petitioning the general commanding for his dismissal. Washington made answer in the

"General Orders, Sept. 17th, 1775. — The Rev. Mr. John Murray is appointed Chaplain to the Rhode Island Regiments, and is to be respected as such." [3]

Failing health, culminating in a severe sickness, compelled him to leave the army, after about eight months' service; and after his recovery he devoted himself wholly to the work of the ministry.

At this time Gloucester was suffering from the almost

[1] Answer to an Appeal, p. 10.

[2] Broadside. To be found in the Library of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

[3] From the original Order-Book, in the State Department at Washington.

entire destruction of its business by the war. Poverty and great distress abounded, and as soon as Mr. Murray had sufficiently recovered from his sickness, he returned to the army, and presented the necessitous condition of the town to the attention of the officers whose acquaintance he had made. They responded by prompt and generous donations.

"General Washington led the subscription with £10, each of the major-generals £5, each of the brigadiers £3, besides generous donations from many other respectable characters, in and out of the army."

This he distributed to parties recommended by the selectmen of the town, relieving thereby

"upwards of a thousand individuals, who, in consequence of this very providential and seasonable support, were enabled to get through the worst winter they ever experienced through the war."[1]

The town records show that, "April 3, 1776," it was

"*voted unanimously*, That this town returns their sincere thanks to the compassionate donors of a sum of money sent by the hands of Mr. John Murray for the relief of our poor, which he lays out in provisions, and distributes among them according to their necessities."

Notwithstanding these services, religious bigotry maddened the people against their benefactor, and before the year closed, a mob collected around the house of Mr. Sargent, determined to ride Mr. Murray out of town; but being dissuaded from this, warned him to

[1] Broadside, mentioned in previous note.

leave at once, and threatened violence if he neglected to go. Under the sanction of an old provincial law, an attempt was made to expel him as a vagrant; but this was frustrated by a deed of gift from one of his friends, which constituted him a freeholder. Letters from abroad were solicited against him, with the view of making him an object both of political and of religious hatred. In these he was accused of being a spy in the employ of the British ministry, of being closeted with Tories wherever he went, of having been inimical to the interests of the country, and grossly immoral while in the army, and of being in every respect a bad and dangerous man. At this time Dr. Stiles wrote the letter already alluded to, in which, after insinuating that Mr. Murray was an enemy to the patriot cause, he avowed his belief that he was "a Romanist in disguise, endeavoring to excite confusion in our churches."

Of course these attacks, and the insinuations of which they were so fruitful, not only increased the rage of Mr. Murray's religious foes, but also roused the wrath of the patriots; and so curses, anathemas, and sometimes stones, followed his steps as he walked the streets. But fearless and undisturbed, he stood at his post, converts multiplied around him, and the affection and zeal of his friends increased as the opposition grew more furious. In February, 1777, he was summoned from his bed, being then quite sick, to appear before the Committee of Safety, all the members of which then present were his avowed enemies, and was there subjected to an insulting questioning as to his business in town and his right to remain. Here he bore himself manfully, answered all that was charged and insinuated

against him, and declared his firm determination not to be intimidated by false accusations, nor by threats of violence. The Committee decided that he should leave town, and served a notice on him that he must "depart in five days from the first of March." As he paid no heed to their warning, the matter was brought before a meeting of the town, March 10, in the records of which is the following minute: —

"The question was put, whether the town approve of the conduct of the late Committee in desiring Mr. John Murray to depart this town in five days from the 1st of March, 1777. It was voted in the affirmative, by 54 votes for it and only 8 against it."

But he took no notice of this, nor does there seem to have been any further attempt to compel him to leave the place. The following, which came to the notice of the citizens not long after, was sufficient to dispose of the charges against his character and patriotism, and to leave further opposition wholly to his religious enemies: —

"Camp at Middle-brook, May 27th, 1777.

"These may certify, that Mr. John Murray was appointed Chaplain to Col. Varnum's Regiment by his Excellency General Washington, during the army's lying before Boston. And during his officiating in that capacity his conduct was regulated by the laws of virtue and propriety; his actions were such as to make him respected as an honest man and a good citizen. He lived beloved, and left the army esteemed by all his connections and patrons.

"Nathaniel Greene, *Major General.*" [1]

[1] The original is in the library of Tufts College.

This certificate, which was doubtless useful in silencing political opposition in many other localities, enabled Mr. Murray to go from place to place with his message of salvation; and, considering the distracted state of the country during the war, he is to be regarded eminently successful in obtaining so many opportunities for the utterance of his sentiments.

In his theological views Mr. Murray was in hearty accord with James Relly, of London, and, as we shall see more fully farther on, was very much disturbed, and sometimes greatly embittered, when any other theory of Universalism was advocated. In the foundation of his theory, Mr. Relly was Calvinistic. He accepted the then common notion, that all men, having sinned in Adam, justly incurred eternal damnation, and that Christ had borne the infinite guilt and punishment of all who should be saved. But it was not clear to him that there was any ground of justice in the arbitrary transfer of this sin and penalty to an infinitely pure being. He believed the divine record that "the soul which sinneth, *it* shall die," and that the innocent shall not suffer in the place of the guilty. How, then, could a transfer of human sin and penalty to Christ be consistent with that law?

How could it be reconciled with equity? The divine sovereignty, without regard to inherent justice in the plan, could not account for it; for the absoluteness that could set justice aside might just as easily, and more mercifully, have gone straight to its aim, by remitting instead of transferring sin and its deserts. To say that the sufferings of Christ were merely *accepted* as satisfaction for human deserts, only *reckoned* as such by

God's sovereign pleasure, was no adequate explanation, since they were thus only a fictitious, not a real, satisfaction; and, further, any sufferings whatever, even those of a man, would have answered just as well as an arbitrary acceptance of the coequal of God. The perfect consistency of God's procedure, its absolute harmony with justice and equity, Relly found, as he claimed, in such a real and thorough union of Christ with the human race as made their acts his and his theirs. All men, he held, were really in Adam, and sinned in him, not by a fictitious imputation, but by actual participation; equally so are all men in the second Adam, "the head of every man," and he is as justly accountable for what they do as is the head in the natural body accountable for the deeds of all the members united to that head. Accordingly Christ, in his corporate capacity, was truly guilty of the offence of the human race, and could be, as he actually was, justly punished for it; and the race, because of this union, really suffered in him all the penalty which he endured, and thus fully satisfied justice. There is no more punishment, therefore, due for sin, nor any further occasion for declaring the demands of the law, except to make men feel their inability to obey, and thus compel them to an exclusive reliance on Christ the head. He has effected a complete and finished justification of the whole world. When man believes this, he is freed from the sense of guilt, freed also from all doubt and fear. Until he believes it, he is, whether in this world or in another, under the condemnation of unbelief and darkness, the only condemnation now possible to the human race. In illustration and defence of these views, Mr. Relly

wrote and published several works, and he evidently regarded Mr. Murray as an able exponent of his theory of Redemption. Under date of "Feb. 13, 1775," Mr. Relly writes: —

"I appeal to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that I am sincerely thankful, even from the bottom of my heart, for my dear Brother Murray. May He make him a burning and a shining light. From my earliest acquaintance with him, I considered him as a polished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty, and thought him destined to the work of the ministry." [1]

Of Mr. Murray's style in advocating the Rellyan theory, and some of the methods of interpretation which he adopted, the most satisfactory account and criticism is that given by the late Hosea Ballou 2d, D.D., in an article in the "Universalist Quarterly" for January, 1848: —

"It would be difficult," says Dr. Ballou, "to give an idea of his public discourses, they were so *extempore* in their character, and so full of unexpected far-fetched combinations. No man ever exceeded him in rapidly weaving together a web of texts, connected only by the slightest verbal relations; no man ever felt more confident than he of the validity of such workmanship. Often he but allegorized a Scriptural incident or circumstance that supplied him with a few slender threads, which grew, under his dexterous manufacture, into the complete garment of Universal Salvation. The text, 'Thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron, thy brother, for glory and beauty,' denoted that Christ is our high priest, typified by Aaron; that his *garments* are all mankind, for he clothed himself

[1] The Ladies' Repository, vol. xiv. p. 192.

with our nature; that we are all *holy* in him, for he is made unto us wisdom, sanctification, and redemption; and, finally, that his garments, or all mankind, shall be glorious and beautiful.[1] Sometimes he illustrated his text by standard points in the Calvinistic divinity. 'Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world,' shows that the sin which Christ put away by his death was that of the whole world, not of a part only; and that all were thenceforth free from punishment. Sometimes, again, he reasons on general principles, from the character of God and the force of moral considerations. This, however, is but seldom; his arguments being usually a species of mere dialectics. In the disputations that were forced upon him wherever he went, he never failed either to convince his opponents by surprising turns, which seemed to flash out new light on the subject, or else to perplex them by his adroitness and eccentric range of thought. Not that he resorted to these methods by artifice; his own mind naturally moved in the track which he followed, and the enthusiastic assurance that he felt in the truth of his arguments and illustrations gave them force with his hearers.

"We think he did not usually urge the Antinomian bearings of his doctrine quite so offensively as did Relly, though the views of both were the same in effect. As individuals, all are equally condemned by God's law; as members of Christ, all are equally justified. Since we bore the full penalty of divine justice in Christ's death, there can be no more punishment for sin, the sufferings that still follow transgression being only its necessary consequence, not its punishment. This was considered an important distinction. Faith in our 'union' with Christ is requisite to free us from the fear of wrath and from the feeling of guilt, and this faith is attended with

[1] Letters and Sketches of Sermons, by John Murray, vol. iii. p. 11.

love to God and man as its natural fruits, but not as obedience, properly speaking. Of this latter we can have none save that which is performed for us by our 'Head.' A few are elected to obtain a knowledge of the truth in this life, and these go into Paradise immediately at death. But the rest, who die in unbelief, depart into darkness, where they will remain under terrible apprehensions of God's wrath until they are enlightened. Their sufferings are neither penal nor disciplinary, but simply the effect of unbelief. Some will believe and be delivered from their darkness in the intermediate state. At the general judgment, such as have not been previously brought into the truth will 'come forth to the resurrection of damnation;' and, through ignorance of God's purpose, they will 'call on the rocks and mountains to fall on them, and hide them from the face of Him who sitteth on the throne,' while the elect shall not be judged at all, having already judged themselves, but shall sit on the tribunal conjointly with Christ. When 'the books shall be opened,' however, in which all actions are recorded, 'every mouth shall be stopped, and the whole world become guilty before God.' Then the Judge will make the final separation, dividing 'the sheep,' or universal human nature, 'from the goats,' which are the fallen angels, and send the latter away 'into everlasting fire.' At the same time he will open another book, 'the book of life,' in which all his members are recorded, and having made himself known, like Joseph of old, to his ignorant, terrified brethren, he will receive all mankind into 'the kingdom prepared for them before the foundation of the world.'[1] For the devils

[1] "I have gathered this summary of his doctrines from his Letters and Sketches. See also, Life (Whittemore's edition, 1833), pp. 233–237, where Mrs. Murray gives a summary. For the process of the General Judgment, see Letters and Sketches, vol. i. pp. 95, 114, 279–283; ii. 222, 223, 247, 248; iii. 351–353. See Life, Appendix D." [Dr. Ballou.]

there is no explicit promise of release; but Murray evidently had a secret hope in their favor,[1] on the ground, we suppose, of what used to be called 'the uncovenanted mercies of God.'

"His manner of interpreting Scripture was very extraordinary, even when compared with the exegesis adopted in the old Presbyterian Confession of Faith. It can be matched, however, by specimens from some of the earliest fathers, and by usages of some recent theosophists. Like Relly, he sees Christ embodying all men in himself everywhere in the Bible. In this verse of the 49th Psalm, 'Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of *my heels* shall compass me about?' it is Christ who speaks, meaning by his *heels* all mankind, who were his lower members; accordingly, it was his *heel*, the heel of the woman's Seed, which the Serpent was to bruise, — that is, mankind.[2] Isaiah says (xxiv.), 'Behold, the Lord maketh the earth *empty;*' this was when he was 'lifted up from the earth, and drew all men unto him,' leaving the earth empty of them.[3] Noah sent forth a raven from the ark (Gen. viii.); the ark was Christ, containing us, and the raven was our uncleanness, which he put away, — the raven being an unclean bird.[4] These are but specimens of his interpretations. He also seems to have adopted Relly's rule, to apply to Christ every text in which anything good is attributed to men. Thus, all the beatitudes in the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount are spoken only of Christ, — 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, . . . they that mourn, . . . the meek,' etc., for none but Christ answered this description. He, too, was the 'blessed man,' mentioned in the first Psalm, who had 'not walked in the counsel of the

[1] Letters and Sketches, i. 386, 387; ii. 348; iii. 358.
[2] Ibid. i. 45, 88, 90.
[3] Ibid. i. 89.
[4] Ibid. i. 48.

ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners,' etc.[1] In the use of this rule, however, he was by no means consistent. They who had 'done good, and should come forth to the resurrection of life,' were the believers, who might be said, in a qualified sense, to have done good.[2] Sometimes, also, Christ is spoken of as wicked, since he was made sin for us, in his 'corporate capacity,' as the 'Head of every man.' Thus, when Jeremiah says (xxx.), 'Behold the whirlwind of the Lord goeth forth with fury; a continuing whirlwind, it shall fall with pain upon the *head* of the *wicked*,' it is doubtful whether Christ, the 'Head' of our wicked race, is meant, or that 'wicked' one spoken of in 2 Thess. ii.[3] As the requisitions of the law can be fulfilled by no man in his own person, many of the Scripture injunctions are accounted for on what may be called the rule of defiance. Thus, the exhortations, 'Strive to enter in at the strait gate,' 'work out your own salvation,' etc., were given only as challenges, that our impotence to perform the impossibilities might be the more sensibly felt.[4] Some passages of this kind, however, he interprets in the natural way, notwithstanding the contrary demands of his system. But we must pass on to a miscellaneous class of examples. The 'son of perdition,' whom alone our Saviour had 'lost' (John, xvii.), was not Judas, but 'the man of sin' (2 Thess. ii.), or the devil, who 'sitteth in the temple of God' (that is, in 'our bodies, which are the temple of God'), and Christ 'lost' him when he put away sin by his own death.[5] Isaiah says (lvi.), 'All flesh shall come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed

[1] Letters and Sketches, i. 229, 368. But see, also, iii. 193–198, a later sketch, where this exposition is somewhat modified.

[2] Ibid. i. 278–283.

[3] Ibid. i. 38.

[4] Ibid. i. 107, 148, 149.

[5] Ibid. i. 124–127.

against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.' Now these, 'carcasses' are the body of sin and death which cleaves to every man, but which shall be separated from our nature in the last day, and be 'looked upon' with abhorrence by all.[1] The 'chaff' and the 'tares' or 'children of the devil,' which are to be separated from the 'wheat,' or 'good seed,' and then burned, are the sins of mankind.[2] When Christ says, 'Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's,' etc., he means by Cæsar the devil; and the doctrine of the text is, that all our sins are to be rendered back to the devil, but our souls unto God, for they are God's.[3] The 'abomination of desolation standing in the holy place,' is all kinds of sin standing, or dwelling, in human nature, which has been made a 'holy place' by Christ, — all sin that is mingled with God's purchased possession.[4] The 'sin unto death' (1 John, v.), is sin in general; for 'the wages of sin is *death*.'[5] The 'second death' is that which we suffered in Christ's crucifixion; the first having taken place in Adam's fall.[6] The man in the parable who had not on 'a wedding-garment,' was the devil, who shall be cast out 'speechless' in the day of judgment, etc., etc.[7]

"From the foregoing sketch it will be seen that his Universalism was based exclusively on the fact of the 'Union' of all men with Christ in such a sense that his punishment and obedience were theirs. It was but this one idea unfolded out to its complete extent. He does not, indeed, wholly overlook other considerations; but whether drawn from the character of God, from moral

[1] Letters and Sketches, i. 49, 69, 75, 112, 113.
[2] Ibid. i. 315; ii. 34–36.
[3] Ibid. i. 51, 115.
[4] Ibid. i. 56, 57.
[5] Ibid. i. 44.
[6] Ibid. i. 62.
[7] Ibid. i. 58.

principles, or from the direct disclosures which the Scriptures give of the final state of things in the divine economy, they were all of quite secondary importance with him. Indeed, with his views of justice and of God's law, even the arguments which he did sometimes infer from the divine perfections were questionable, though he does not seem to have been aware of the logical inconsistency. There was a latent consciousness, however, that held him back from resting the final result on this ground. But the 'Union' was sufficient of itself; it made the result a fact already 'finished' in reality, needing no further confirmation."

His rigid adherence to this theory was advantageous to him in some respects, for it furnished a sufficient reply, in his judgment, to whatever argument or objection might be urged against the doctrine of the final subjection of all souls; but it not unfrequently placed him at a disadvantage, and gave occasion to his opponents to say that he was inconsistent, and at times denied what at other times he had insisted on as truth.

Thus, Rev. Mr. Croswell, of Boston, in his pamphlet published in 1775, entitled, "Mr. Murray Unmask'd," said: —

"Mr. John Murray, a little before his late evangelizing tour to the Eastward, while preaching was pleased to inform his auditory that he had been misrepresented as holding *Universal Salvation*, declaring he did not hold *that* doctrine, but only Universal Redemption."

Mrs. Murray, in her continuation of her husband's "Memoir," thus alludes to the charge, and accounts for it: —

"He has frequently said *he did not believe in Universal Salvation*, because he saw the majority of mankind were

not saved. But he was a firm believer in UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION, because that sacred volume, which he steadfastly and unwaveringly believed to be the word of God, assured him the price was paid, and the whole human family was *redeemed.*

"It was the neglecting to distinguish between *salvation* and *redemption* which so frequently drew upon the preacher the charge of prevarication, or, as it was termed by Mr. Croswell, *hiding.* An article of intelligence may be an *established fact;* it may most importantly affect us; but so long as the mind refuses to admit its authenticity, we are undeniably subjected to all those agonizing apprehensions which we should endure if no such fact existed. And it was the salvation from these mental sufferings which Mr. Murray supposed consequent upon a preached gospel; in other words, an exemption from those tortures, that consciousness of condemnation which is most emphatically described when it is said, He who believeth not is, or shall be, damned.

"Yet it is an established truth, that every *believer* was once an *unbeliever;* every believer, then, was *once damned,* and it was only when he became a believer that he *was saved* from those countless agonies which erst times pierced him through with many sorrows. But he was *redeemed,* the price was paid, ere ever he was called into existence. Thus, in this view, redemption and salvation are *distinct considerations.*" [1]

Mr. Murray was at times very clear in making this distinction, but at other times he was at least very unguarded in his speech, and used the two words as though they were perfect synonyms.

"There is no possibility," he said on one occasion, "of reconciling Scripture testimonies, except we discriminate

[1] Life of Rev. John Murray, pp. 400, 401.

between the *salvation believed* and the *salvation consequent upon believing.* The first is like that all-sufficient Redeemer, by whom it is wrought out and completely finished; it is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, enduring continually, eternally abiding; yea, *although we believe not, Christ Jesus remaineth faithful.* If, like Peter, we should *deny* the Lord, whose purchased we are, still he will never *deny himself;* such is the character of the *first* salvation, of the salvation believed. But the *second salvation,* or the salvation *consequent on believing* this truth, is an operation of, or upon the mind of man; and *this salvation* is ever fluctuating, ever unstable, like the being with whom it is found." [1]

"I have no doctrine," he said on another occasion, "but the doctrine taught by God the Saviour. I reject every doctrine which the mouth of the Lord hath not spoken. The apostolic churches were formed by professors of the doctrine of Universal Redemption. Jesus Christ and his apostles preached and defended this doctrine. All the writers of revelation were strong in the faithful belief of the doctrine of Universal Salvation." [2]

On another occasion, he was met by a gentleman who said: —

"I have heard, sir, that you publicly advocate the doctrine of *Universal Salvation,*" and then, after the expression of surprise at such a report, asked him, "Is the report true?" Mr. Murray replied, "Yes, sir, it is indeed very true." [3]

So, in a sermon on Rom. iv. 25, he seems to ignore his favorite distinction: —

"Either, therefore, Jesus Christ was delivered up for

[1] Letters and Sketches, iii. 192. [2] Ibid. ii. 422.
[3] Ibid. i. 246.

my offences and raised again for my justification, or he was not. If he were, I am to all intents and purposes saved in Jesus Christ with an everlasting salvation. If he were not, I am to all intents and purposes doomed to everlasting misery." [1]

Concerning a conversation which he had with a very intelligent woman who argued against Universalism, he records : —

"As fast as she made her propositions I endeavored to answer, and to prove, by plain Scripture illustrations, from every testimony she introduced, *her salvation* and the final salvation of all men." [2]

Another instance occurs in a sermon preached by him from the text, "By grace ye are saved." He thus reports a synopsis of it : —

"1st. What are we to understand by grace? *Certainly,* favor. What by the grace of God? Undoubtedly, the favor of God. Thus, the grace of God bringeth salvation.

"2dly. What is the salvation which is accomplished by the grace of God? It is not a temporal, it is a spiritual salvation; neither is it a temporary salvation, it is an eternal salvation, firm and enduring as its Omnipotent and Self-existing Author.

"3dly. For whom is this salvation? Who are they that are saved by grace? This is indeed an important question, much too important to be answered on the authority of the creature. Let us repair to the fountain-head, and, inquiring of the oracles of truth, the answer which we shall receive from the lip of divine veracity should most assuredly be established, should be received with all acceptation.

[1] Letters and Sketches, i. 327. [2] Ibid. i. 346.

"Who are they that are saved by grace? All mankind; because all have sinned, and in their own characters cannot demand salvation. All mankind; because our Saviour died for all men, because he gave himself a ransom for all men, because it is the will of God that all men should be saved and come unto the knowledge of his truth, because God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing unto them their trespasses.

"But when was this grace exemplified? At what period were all men saved? While they were dead in trespasses and sins. So says the context; while we were yet sinners, in due time Christ died for the ungodly, — so says the Holy Ghost in many passages." [1]

It is evident from these extracts that "the neglecting to distinguish," of which Mrs. Murray complains, was not always the fault of the hearer.

In the summer of 1776, Mr. Murray visited Philadelphia, and while in that region published from the London edition the "Christian Hymns, Poems, and Spiritual Songs, Sacred to the Praise of God our Saviour. By James and John Relly," at Burlington, N. J. The character of this book, and the use made of it by the Universalists in America, will be described in another volume. It is mentioned here as affording an opportunity of noting some of the places in which numbers of Universalists were at that time to be found. Appended to the "Hymns" is a list of the subscribers for the book, with the number of copies taken by each. The total number of the former was two hundred and twenty-three, subscribing for four hundred and sixty-eight copies. Providence, R. I., leads in the number of subscribers, forty-seven taking eighty-three copies; Gloucester,

[1] Letters and Sketches, i. 370.

Mass., leads in the number of copies, ninety-three being taken by thirty-eight subscribers. Then come Norwich, Ct., forty-six subscribers, eighty-three copies; Portsmouth, N. H., twenty-eight subscribers, thirty-eight copies; Boston, Mass., sixteen subscribers, thirty-eight copies; New London, Ct., fifteen subscribers, forty copies; Philadelphia, Pa., and New Rochelle, N. Y., each furnished six subscribers; East Greenwich, R. I., four; Imlays Town, N. J., three; Cranberry and Burlington, N. J., each two; Barnegat, and Allentown, N. J., New York, and Kingsbridge, N. Y., Coventry, Killingsworth, Guilford, and Pomfret, Ct., Roxbury, Mass., and Newport R. I., one each.

Sometime during the year 1777, — probably not long after General Greene's certificate concerning Mr. Murray's standing while in the army had put a stop to the political opposition in Gloucester, — Mr. Murray again visited Portsmouth, N. H., where he induced Mr. Noah Parker, a respectable mechanic of that town, to enter the ministry. Mr. Parker was born March 17, 1734.

"He received a good education," says Mr. Charles W. Brewster, in his "Rambles about Portsmouth," "after which he chose to learn a trade; but though working several hours a day at his trade, he was a profound student, and became well versed in all the literature of the day. He was a man of unbounded liberality of feeling, carrying his charity so far beyond his means that he would sometimes borrow to aid one in want, trusting to Providence for the means of repaying."

He probably never received ordination, but continued to work in his shop as a black and white smith. He at once gathered a congregation in a school-house in Ports-

mouth, where his congregation regularly assembled a few years, and then for a while occupied the Sandemanian meeting-house. In 1784 they erected a new house of worship, in which Mr. Parker continued to be their minister till his death, Aug. 17, 1787. His ministry was greatly blessed, and was eminently successful. He was a decided Rellyan, and was much beloved and respected by Mr. Murray, with whom he frequently exchanged pulpit services. Mrs. Murray was enthusiastic in her admiration of him as an "exemplary philanthropist."

Mr. Murray no doubt supposed that Mr. Parker and himself were the only preachers of Universal Salvation in the country at that time. But in November, 1777, Dr. Isaac Davis, a medical practitioner, who had been a preacher of the doctrine several years, died. He was, it is believed, a native of Windsor, Conn., where he resided several years; but later in life, and to its close, his home was in Somers, in the same State. Rev. Samuel Peters, in his "General History of Connecticut," published in 1780, mentions (edition of 1877, p. 199), among the sects as existing in that State, the "Davisonians," who "teach Universal Salvation and deny the existence of a hell or devils." How numerous this sect was, and what their form of organization, if they had any, is not now known. The probability is that its numbers were small and that it did not long survive the death of its founder.

Rev. Thomas Whittemore, in a "Memoir of the Universalist Society in Oxford, Mass.," published in vol. vi. of the "Universalist Miscellany," 1849, said: —

"The doctrine of Universalism had been preached in

Oxford long before 1785," — the date of the legal organization of the society. "The attention of certain individuals in this town was first drawn to the subject of Universalism by the conversations of one Dr. Isaac Davis, who visited that place from Somers, in Connecticut. He was, at this time, an aged man; and it is said he had written a book upon the subject. We have never seen this book, but these statements in regard to Dr. Davis are made on the strength of the testimony of the aged Universalists of Oxford who were living in the year 1827, at which time the author of this article first visited that town to glean all the facts that could be found in regard to the early history of Universalism there."

The Rev. Anson Titus, who has sought to collect facts with regard to Dr. Davis, says that "it is also traditional among the descendants of Dr. Davis in Somers," that he wrote such a book.

Probably Dr. Davis's visit to Oxford was during the revolutionary war, as in 1775 several members of the "Standing Order" parish in Oxford changed their religious sentiments, some of whom "declared themselves of the sect of Universalists," according to Whitney's "History of Worcester County," as quoted by Mr. Titus, in an article in the "Universalist Quarterly" for October, 1881. We have no further information with regard to Dr. Davis, but it is evident that he was active and influential.

Adams Streeter and Caleb Rich began to preach about this time. It is difficult to determine which of them was first in the work. The first was born in Framingham, Mass., Dec. 31, 1735. He subsequently resided in Douglas, Oxford, and Milford. The late Rev. Dr. Ballou says ("Universalist Quarterly," vol. v. p. 93)

that Mr. Streeter "was formerly a Baptist minister, and became a Universalist in 1777 or 1778." In the resolutions passed by the Oxford society, preliminary to their organization, April 27, 1785, they say that they "have for a number of years past assembled on the Sabbath-day for public worship, and have attended to the instructions of Rev. Adams Streeter, and supported him by free contributions from time to time."[1] In August of the same year, Mr. Streeter's name appears in the list of the members of the Universalist Society at Milford. During the year 1785 he seems to have divided his services between Milford, Oxford, and Providence, R. I. In 1786, as Rev. Elhanan Winchester was to spend the winter at Providence, the society at Boston requested the Providence friends "to dispense with Mr. Streeter's visits at the usual periods during the winter, he engaging to renew them again when Mr. Winchester is about to leave you." In June the arrangements at Providence were renewed, and continued till the time of Mr. Streeter's death. Under date of Sept. 14, 1786, Mr. Andrews, clerk of the Providence Society, communicated the following to Rev. Mr. Winchester: —

"At present we are in a state of mourning from being deprived by death of the usual visits paid us by Friend Streeter. He, on the road coming to visit us on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in August, fell sick of a bilious disorder at the house of Stephen Whipple, in Smithfield, and died the Saturday evening following, retaining to his last his reason and great fortitude."

At what time Mr. Murray made Mr. Streeter's ac-

[1] Universalist Miscellany, 1849, vol. vi. p. 315.

quaintance is not known, but he esteemed him highly, as did the congregation in Boston.

Caleb Rich was born in Sutton, Mass., August 12, 1750, of strict Congregational parents. From his autobiography, published in the "Candid Examiner," at Montrose, Penn., 1827, the following facts with regard to his life are gleaned. When he was not more than nine or ten years old he began to be tortured with the fear of hell. "I often looked upon insects and poisonous reptiles, thinking how much better their lot was in this world than mine." So he continued a great part of the time till seventeen or eighteen years of age, when, he says, "I got hold of the first link in the chain of causes that led me into Universalism." Before this, however, his father had become a Baptist, while his mother still remained a Congregationalist. It was this division in the family, and the two different meetings they attended, that seems to have set Caleb on inquiry. Hearing it said that there were more than a hundred different denominations, he saw but little chance of getting the truth from two only, namely, Baptists and Congregationalists. He therefore resolved to study the Bible for himself, earnestly praying God to give him understanding of it. This he practised several years; and soon after beginning, was satisfied that the Congregationalists were wrong about infant sprinkling being the antitype of circumcision. When about twenty-one he left his father's to go to Warwick, to occupy a new farm about sixty miles distant. Bidding farewell to his parents and friends, he started in a very melancholy mood; and when he had travelled about fifteen miles, this was swallowed up in the most distressing fear of

hell. Praying as he travelled, he went about fifteen miles further, and was partially relieved; this he took to be *conversion.* At Warwick he associated with the Baptists, and advocated their cause. After some time a conversation with his brother, with whom he boarded, about God's grace, showed him his own hypocrisy, and this drove him into new torture. He prayed long, and at length it was suggested to him that his prayer was altogether selfish, as it was only from fear of hell. Then he prayed for a better motive, but found that this prayer was only from the same fear of hell; and so he soncluded that he could do nothing but from some selfish motive, and gave himself up to God. He then had a vision, which resulted in his firm assurance and acquiescence in God's will. After this he never could bear to hear the fear of hell mentioned as a motive to make men religious. He still adhered to the Baptists, and read the Scriptures diligently. Then he was taught in a dream to follow no man, not even the Baptists; and this dream he regarded as from the outpouring of God's spirit upon him. He did not yet see that all men would be saved, but took up a notion from the third chapter of Genesis, that "all men who were created in Adam, and fell in or died in him, would infallibly be restored and made alive in Christ, while those who were added to our first parents after their fall ['I will greatly multiply thy conception and sorrows'] would cease to exist after the death of the body." These views he communicated to his Baptist brethren, hoping that they would be a source of relief to them, as they had been to himself; but they caused commotion and raised great opposition, and on account of these senti-

ments Caleb and his brother Nathaniel were not permitted to be baptized, nor to belong to the society itself. There was also a Joseph Goodell in the same condition. These three formed a society of their own, by legal warrant and procedure; and in one year their society increased to ten members. The second year the revolutionary war broke out, and Caleb with many others were called to go down to Lexington, just after the battle. Here he enlisted for eight months, but got a substitute, and went to his brother-in-law's at Oxford. During this eight months he and others who had come into his views held private meetings in Oxford and Sutton, with sometimes thirty hearers. They went from house to house, and sometimes continued their meetings till midnight, and even day-break, dwelling on the promise made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and reading the 11th chapter of Romans. During this time he went once to Thompson, Conn. The people had heard of him, and wished him to preach a sermon; but as he never had *preached*, as it is called, he consented to expound the Scriptures to them; which he did for the greater part of a day, and gained some proselytes. When his eight months expired at Oxford, "our brethren in Sutton, Oxford, Charlton, Dudley, and Douglas, amounted, as I should judge, to forty or fifty persons." He then returned to Warwick, where he experienced a great trial with regard to his intended wife, her family being much opposed to him on account of his religious views, — till he converted them, and they consented to the union. He was married in January, 1778. The following April he had a vision or dream, by which he was brought to see his mistake about those children of

Eve being annihilated who were born after her transgression. He was now confirmed in the belief of the salvation of all men, — "that the first Adam, and every individual of his posterity, from the beginning of the world to the end, did as truly and positively pass with and in Christ from death to life, and became heirs of the inheritance." Now he felt himself called on to preach. He "had heard of a Mr. Murray at Cape Ann, but had never seen him nor had any communication from him." He felt great emotion at the thought of preaching, but had another dream that encouraged him. In about a month (probably in May, 1778) he began to preach at Warwick, and there was soon a considerable addition to his society. Soon he was called upon to preach at Richmond, N. H., at stated times, and collected a considerable society there. Thomas Barns came over from Jaffrey, in the same State, out of curiosity; was convinced, and invited Mr. Rich to Jaffrey, where considerable numbers were soon gathered. A meeting of a General Society was shortly after called at Richmond, when Mr. Rich was chosen minister, a regular church was formed, and three deacons appointed, — one from Warwick, one from Richmond, and one from Jaffrey. Church discipline was established, and an annual meeting was appointed at Richmond. At this annual meeting letters of license to preach were given, and ordinations were solemnized.

"At one of these annual meetings," says Mr. Rich, "after I had preached about three years, it was agreed that brother C. Rich should receive public ordination as minister of the united society of Warwick, Richmond, and Jaffrey, and wherever he should be called by divine

Providence. We sent for Elder Adams Streeter to assist at said ordination. Said Streeter had been ordained in the Baptist order. His faith was increased till it became Abrahamic; and accordingly the ordination was attended in Richmond, accompanied with about three hundred people; and as I considered myself legally authorized, I scrupled not to solemnize the ordinance of marriage. But this could not fail to give great offence to the Congregational Society in Warwick, and the first deacon of said church came to inform me that every dollar that I took for marrying people in that town took so much by fraud from their minister. 'Yet,' said he, 'if you will agree to do so no more, I will promise not to prosecute you for past offences.' As he was no more a town minister than I was, we refused to submit to this requirement, and soon they prepared war against us. I was indicted before the county court for celebrating the ordinance of marriage, not being legally authorized. I appeared at court, made full proof of my ordination, and was acquitted by the court, and had my name recorded as a regular minister in the town of Warwick."

The late Rev. Russell Streeter thus speaks of Mr. Rich's peculiar theology: —

"Father Rich, in the only conversation I ever had with him (1816), was the first preacher who openly contended that all the (evil) consequences of sin were confined to the present life. He was very earnest on this point; he argued it on the ground of the 'Treatise,' [1] as it appeared for more than a quarter of a century, viz., that man was first *created* in Christ Jesus, and then *formed* of the dust; and that as he stood related to the earth of Adam only, he sinned. Hence sin, as we call it, to use his own words, 'originated solely in the flesh and blood, and ended with

[1] Ballou's Treatise on Atonement.

the same. The spirit being of heavenly origin remained pure, though blended with carnal bodies; as pure metals were the same before being separated from the earth or dross, as afterwards; as wheat was the same before being separated from the chaff,' etc." [1]

These views were severely criticised by Mr. Murray, when he became acquainted with them, — as see his "Letters," vol. ii. p. 308, — but this was not till several years after Mr. Rich began to preach.

[1] Universalist Quarterly, January, 1872, p. 76.

CHAPTER III.

1779–1786.

Excommunication of Gloucester Universalists from the First Church. — Articles of Association. — Mr. Murray's Field of Labor during the War. — House of Worship built in Gloucester. – Legal Troubles with the First Parish. — The first Suit withdrawn, and Mr. Murray becomes Prosecutor. — Agreement of his Friends to Indemnify him against Loss. — History of the Case in the Courts. — Pamphlet Issued by the Gloucester Universalists. — Replied to by the Agent of the First Parish. — Dr. Stiles' Letter. — Mr. Murray's Answer. — Final Decision of the Case in Mr. Murray's favor. — Anecdotes of the Trial. — Itinerant Labors of Mr. Murray. — Suggests a Meeting in Convention. — Mr. Murray's Visit to Good Luck. — Death of Thomas Potter and Disposition of his Property. — The Association at Oxford, Mass. — Mr. Murray to Rev. Noah Parker on the Results of the Association. — The Charter of Compact, and its adoption by Societies in Milford, Oxford, and Warwick. — Purchase of Church Property in Boston. — Universalists in Providence, R. I. — Rev. Elhanan Winchester. — His Childhood and his Early Religious Views. — His Literary Attainments. — His Account of how he was led to the Belief of Universalism. — Rev. Mr. Boggs Appointed to Dispute with him. — Mr. Boggs refuses, and pronounces Mr. Winchester's course Manly and Christian. — Mr. Winchester is Excommunicated. — His First Universalist Sermon. — The Baptists' Statement of their dealing with Mr. Winchester. — The Latter's Letter to Rev. Dr. Stillman. — Peculiarities of Mr. Winchester's Theology. — Personal Relations of Murray and Winchester. — Rev. Moses Winchester. — The Congregation Gathered by Elhanan Winchester in Philadelphia Organize as Universal Baptists. — Their purchase of Mason's Lodge. — Mr. Winchester's Hymn Book. — Morgan Edwards on Mr. Winchester. — Rev. Clement Sumner. — Rev. Thomas Barns. — Rev. Zephaniah Lathe. — Rev. Noah Murray. — Rev. David Evans. — Daniel Hall. — Gamaliel Reynolds. — Mr. Murray's Letter. — Shippie Townsend.

WHILE Mr. Murray was being persecuted and threatened with mob violence, his followers who were connected with the Church of the First Parish do

not seem to have been molested by their church; but in February, 1777, they were "called upon to give reasons, if they had any, why they absented themselves from the worship and ordinances of God in His house." The persons thus summoned were sixteen in number, viz., Epes Sargent and wife, Winthrop Sargent and wife, Ebenezer Parsons and wife, David Pearce, James Millet, Lydia Prentiss, Rebecca Smith, Judith Stevens, Anna Babson, Jemima Cook, Hannah Tucker, Nancy Saunders, and Jemima Parsons. They made answer: "Our reasons for absenting ourselves from your society are purely of a religious nature, which is wholly between God and our own souls." After several church meetings had been held, the above-mentioned, with the exception of James Millet, were publicly suspended in September, 1778. Thus cut off from former associates, and formally separated from other Christian believers, they turned their attention to the creation of an organization for themselves; and on the first of January, 1779, bound themselves together under the following

"ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION.

"ASSOCIATION OF THE INDEPENDENT CHURCH IN GLOCESTER.

"Inasmuch as it hath pleased God of his great mercy, in every age of the world, to choose a people for himself, giving them his fear, and revealing to them his secret; and as this Great Lord of heaven and earth, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, hath been pleased to reveal to babes what he hath hid from the wise and prudent: we, the subscribers, gratefully affected with a sense of the divine goodness in thus distinguishing us,

who had nothing in us to merit his notice, think it our interest and bounden duty to let our light shine before men, that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven. As therefore it hath pleased God to make us acquainted with the voice of the Good Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, we cannot from henceforward follow the voice of a stranger, nor ever give attention to such who are unacquainted with the Saviour of the world. But though we cannot have fellowship with them whose fellowship is not with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, yet we are determined, by the grace of God, never to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but as a Church of Christ, meet together in his name, being persuaded, wherever or whenever two or three are thus met together, the invisible God will be present with them.

"As Christians, we acknowledge no master but Jesus Christ, and as disciples of this divine master, we profess to follow no guide in spiritual matters but his word and his spirit.

"As dwellers in this world, though not of it, we hold ourselves bound to yield obedience to every ordinance of man, for God's sake; and we will be peaceable and obedient subjects to the powers that are ordained of God, in all civil cases; but as subjects of that King whose kingdom is not of this world, we cannot acknowledge the right of any human authority to make laws for the regulating of our conscience in any spiritual matters.

"Thus, as a true independent Church of Christ, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith, we mutually agree to walk together in Christian fellowship, building up each other in our most holy faith, rejoicing in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and determining by his grace no more to be entangled by any yoke of bondage.

"As disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus, we resolve, as far as in us lieth, to live peaceably with all men; yet, as believers living godly in Christ Jesus, we expect to suffer as much persecution as the laws of the country we live in will admit of. But we resolve by the grace of God none of these things shall move us to act inconsistent with our character as Christians. We will as much as possible avoid vain jangling and unnecessary disputation; and should we be reviled, endeavor in patience to possess our souls.

"As an independent Church of Christ thus bound together by the cords of his love, and meeting together in his name, we mutually agree to receive as our Minister, that is, our Servant, sent to labor among us in the work of the Gospel by the great Lord of the Vineyard, our friend and Christian brother, JOHN MURRAY. This we do from a full conviction that the same God that sent the first preachers of Jesus Christ, sent him; and that the same gospel they preached we have from time to time received from him. Thus, believing him a minister of the New Testament, constantly declaring the whole counsel of God, proclaiming the same divine truth that all God's holy prophets from the beginning of the world have declared, — WE cordially receive him as a Messenger from God. And as it hath pleased God to open a great and effectual door for the preaching of his Gospel by this, his servant, in sundry parts of this great continent, wherever it shall please his and our divine master to call him to preach the everlasting Gospel elsewhere, we wish him God-speed, and pray that the good-will of him that dwelt in the bush may accompany him, and make his way clear before him. But should he at any time preach any other gospel than that we have received, we will not wish him God-speed, but consider him as a stranger. And as the great Lord of the harvest has taught us to pray that he would send laborers into his harvest, and as

he never taught us to pray in vain, but has assured us, every one that asketh receiveth, though he has not told us when, whenever he shall see fit to send us a messenger of glad tidings, a publisher of peace, we will with grateful hearts receive him. And as the promise of the divine presence is to any two or three that meet together in the Saviour's name, we are resolved by God's grace, whether we are blessed with the public preaching of the word or not, as often as we find convenient, to meet together to supplicate the divine favor, to praise our redeeming God, to hear his most holy word, and freely to communicate whatever God shall please to manifest to us for our mutual edification.

"And that we may the more effectually show forth his praise, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light, we resolve to pay a serious regard to the exhortations, admonitions, and instructions given to us by the Spirit of God in the epistles dictated to our holy apostles. We will, as far as in us lieth, do good unto all men, but especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

"We will, by the grace of God, in word and in deed, endeavor to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour. And as children of one father, as members of one head, who are united together in Christian fellowship, will, once every month, meet together to hold conference, and to deliberate on whatever may tend to our mutual profit."

This,—so far as we know,—the earliest form of organization by American Universalists, was, as will be seen, rather a declaration of intention to work together as a Christian body, than a form or mode for carrying on their work. It made no provision for the transaction of business, for officials of any kind, or for revenue. And although it has place in the records of the Glouces-

ter society, it is neither accompanied nor followed by any minute of proceedings under it as a form of organization. A few years after it was written it was found to be defective in these respects, and, as we shall hereafter see, gave place to a better business form; but it was not without use in the emergency which called it forth, and did good service in bringing together those who sympathized with Mr. Murray's views. How many, except those already named as excommunicated from the First Parish Church, at first signed these "Articles of Association," cannot now be known, but the whole number of names appended at different times was sixty-one, — thirty-one men and thirty women.

It is very probable that until the close of the War for Independence, the field of Mr. Murray's labors was limited to Gloucester and Boston, in Massachusetts, and to Newport and Providence, in Rhode Island, with frequent visits to Portsmouth, N. H. Mrs. Murray says that it was his custom to be absent from Gloucester during the summer, and we may therefore suppose that he spent the rest of the year in Gloucester. Here great success attended his labors, and "the spacious parlors" of his friend were soon inadequate accommodations for his hearers. A movement was therefore put on foot for the erection of a house of worship, fourteen persons associating themselves together for defraying the expense of building. The spot selected was at the easterly end of Mr. Winthrop Sargent's garden, now the westerly corner of Main and Water streets. It was a one-story frame building, forty-eight feet long and thirty-two and a half feet wide, and contained thirty large square pews, — the prevailing, if not the only,

style of church sittings at that time. These pews were assigned to the fourteen associates, on the basis of their subscriptions to the cost of the building; viz., to Winthrop Sargent, thirteen; David Plumer, three; Isaac Elwell, two; David Pearce, two; Epes Sargent, William Pearce, William Hales, Samuel Sayward, Joseph Foster, Abraham Sawyer, John Somes, Bradbury Sanders, William Murphy, Philemon Haskell, — one each. The cost of the building is not now known. The land on which the meeting-house stood remained a part of the estate of Mr. Sargent till 1799 when, "on the basis of the valuation of 1781," a tax was assessed on the proprietors of the pews, and the sum of one hundred pounds was raised in payment for the land. The house was completed and occupied by dedication, December 25, 1780.

On taking possession of their house of worship, the hopes of Mr. Murray and his followers were doubtless ardent; and for a while they were free from molestation, but before long they were made to feel the most determined opposition and annoyance. The assessors of the First Parish claimed that they were still obligated to contribute, by taxation, to the support of that organization. The Universalists denied this liability, basing their denial on the Bill of Rights prefixed to the Constitution of the Commonwealth, which had recently been adopted, the guarantees of which were, that

"all religious societies shall, at all times, have the exclusive right of electing their public teachers, and of contracting with them for support and maintenance. And all moneys paid by the subject for the support of public worship shall, if he require it, be uniformly applied to the support of the public teacher or teachers of

his own religious sect or denomination, provided there be any on whose instruction he attends."

The First Parish made answer that this provision could not apply in this case, because the congregation of Mr. Murray was not a church or religious society, — "not being incorporated by any order or authority known in this Commonwealth, — but a mere jumble of detached members;" nor was Mr. Murray a teacher of religion, but was to be regarded as one who, "without a character, credentials, or ordination, has assumed the character of a public teacher of piety, religion, and morality, and styles himself *clerk*." [1] And so, on the assumption that they had the right to determine what was and what was not a religious sect, and who was or was not a religious teacher, they proceeded to assess and attempt to collect taxes from the Universalists for the support of the First Parish

There was a way out of this difficulty, which was suggested and urged by many, but without meeting their approval. It was to apply to the Legislature for an act of incorporation. The answer was: —

"Providence has so ordered it, that we should, in the first instance, be called upon to contend for those religious liberties preserved by our excellent Constitution. The inconsiderableness of our party, and the prejudices raised by our enemies in the minds of our fellow-citizens, point us out as the proper objects of the first essay for religious tyranny; and should we fly to the law-makers instead of that great law made by the people to govern the legislature itself, we should, in our apprehension, betray our country's freedom, and act a cowardly part. We

[1] Answer to an Appeal, pp. 13, 16.

should feel ourselves very unhappy if there was no other security in these matters than acts of legislation, which might be repealed at any time when a particular party should prevail." [1]

In 1782 the First Parish enforced their demand by seizing and selling at auction the goods of three members of the Independent Church. From Epes Sargent they took articles of silver plate, from another (perhaps Winthrop Sargent) they took English goods, and from another (probably David Pearce) the anchor of a vessel on the point of sailing. William Pearce, a brother of David, prominent in the mob which, as before referred to, attempted to ride Mr. Murray out of town, had become a convert to Universalism, and, on his resistance of the tax, was lodged by the parish committee in Salem jail. Failing to recover their goods by replevin, the Society instituted a suit against the First Parish, which was afterwards withdrawn as not being tenable in the form in which it was commenced. It was found that in order for an action to be sustained in the court, it must be brought in the name of the religious teacher from whom the money had been diverted. Mrs. Murray relates that her husband's

"reluctance to this step was decided and affecting. He had passed through the country without even allowing or accepting contributions; and to be considered a prosecutor for *moneys* said to be due to him for *preaching the Gospel*, which he had determined to promulgate *free as the light of heaven!* — the very idea was a stab to his long-cherished feelings. It appeared to him like prostrating the integrity of his character, and stripping him

[1] An Appeal to the Impartial Public, p. 31.

of those honors which he had fondly hoped would remain forever unshorn. The situation of his mind upon this occasion may be gathered from two extracts of letters, addressed to him by a respectable gentleman: 'You know the inducement I had to engage in this cause was to be emancipated from the shackles of a pontificate, and my aversion was ever determined from having the suit brought in your name, as well from your abhorrence, as that the result, however favorable, would not establish us upon the broad base of genuine freedom. However, I am now convinced from reflection that our cause will be ruined unless you assume it. Mr. Hitchborne was clear it ought to have been in your name before. At our pressing request he drew the last writ. Mr. Sullivan has declared it *must* be in your name. Mr. Pynchon (allowed on all hands to be deeply versed in the intricacies of the law) assured a gentleman he would warrant success, and even undertake the conducting the cause, if the proper use were made of your name. Mr. Sewall's opinion is in unison with Mr. Pynchon. I hate delay and indecision, and shall lament if chicane and political views must prevail over the purest intentions.'

"To this letter Mr. Murray responded in terms descriptive of much anguish of spirit, and his sympathizing friend immediately replied: —

"'I essay not to communicate the impression which your letter has made upon me. Would that pen and paper were adequate to express all that could be conveyed by the tongue. Shall I be condemned for being of an unsteady disposition, or shall I be justified in my change of sentiment from the variety of events? Be it as it may, it matters not; your letter has produced another alteration in my mind. Your conflict between the resolution you have taken, and the interest of your friends, which I am persuaded is very dear to you, is carried on in your breast to a degree of agony. I see how distressing it is

for you, *even in appearance,* to stand forth and contend for what you have so *nobly held in sovereign contempt.* In this point of view it ceases to be a question. Let the idea of interest perish. I had rather a large part of mine, dear as it is, should be wrested from me, than that you should sacrifice any portion of your peace or your honor; therefore I entreat you, my dear sir, do no violence to your feelings. I thank God, the truth of our cause does not depend upon the decision of a court of judicature; and, admit the worst, it is only what we are bidden to expect, that this world is opposed to the other. Justice, however, notwithstanding my sympathy for you, urges me to repeat that our lawyers see no rational prospect of success, but from your becoming a PRINCIPAL in the business. If you can bend your mind, well; take time to deliberate; delays in law, perhaps, are not so dangerous as in other affairs; at any rate, I entreat you to become more tranquil. I had rather make payment to Parson Forbes than that you should thus suffer.' " [2]

Thus urged to consider the matter anew, Mr. Murray became convinced that the issue affected not himself alone, but every religious denomination in the Commonwealth that was not of the standing order, and also that persistence in his resolution was a sacrifice of the personal interests of his friends, and would be a cowardly giving up of a right which the Constitution guaranteed to all. And so he consented to bring the suit; whereupon Winthrop Sargent, David Pearce, Joseph Foster, David Plumer, John Somes, Joshua Plumer, and Epes Sargent, drew up and executed an agreement that,

"for the more effectual carrying on a certain process at law between John Murray, clerk, and the inhabitants of the First Parish of Glocester, or whatever other form in

[2] Life of Murray, pp. 329, 330.

law may be assumed, for procuring and establishing our Religious Liberties, we do associate, mutually pledge, covenant, agree, and bind ourselves jointly the one to the other, as well for ourselves as our heirs, executors, and administrators, to advance and pay such sum or sums as shall be necessary and adequate to the well conducting of said process, the whole of which costs of suit and other expenses, when terminated, to be respectively by us borne in such proportions as we are taxed in the different rate lists delivered to the collectors by the assessors of the First Parish of Glocester, for 1781, 1782, 1783.

"And it is further agreed, that David Plumer and Joseph Foster, above named, be a committee to transact and conduct the causes before mentioned, and to receive all moneys; they or any of them giving receipts for such sums as shall be paid them, and to be accountable to this association for the expenditure of the same.

"And it is further agreed as the intent and meaning of this association, to comprehend all or any expenses that have arisen in conducting the cause aforesaid heretofore as well as what may arise at this present or in future.

"It is further agreed that the said David Plumer and Joseph Foster, committee, shall have power of assembling this association at such times and place as shall be most expedient.

"And it is further covenanted and agreed that this association will aid, strengthen, counsel, and countenance each other in the prosecution and vindication of their rights against a species of usurpation and tyranny which, though sanctified by the greatest number, has for its object not the good order of civil society, but the subversion of humanity and religious freedom."

Hon. Rufus King was retained as counsel, and the case came to trial in 1783, and was continued on ap-

peal and review till 1786. Mr. King removed to New York before the final decision, when Judges Sullivan and Tudor became Mr. Murray's counsel. Mr. Samuel Whittemore was the committee or agent for the parish, and Theophilus Parsons and Theophilus Bradbury were his counsel. Of the trial in 1785, Mr. Sullivan gave the following account in a letter to Mr. King: —

"June 25th, 1785. On Wednesday last was tried the case of John Murray against the inhabitants of the First Parish of Gloucester. The cause was opened by Mr. Tudor and closed by me; Mr. Bradbury and Parsons for the parish. Many exceptions were taken to the form of the action, but the three judges present, Sewall, Dana, and Sumner, agreed the action to be well brought. On our part, we proved that the Society under the teaching of Murray were a sect different from [Calvinists or the Standing Order] by denying the external rite of baptism. We rested it there. The court thought we ought to prove him to be a teacher of piety, religion, and morality, to entitle him to the action. To this we agreed, and therefore produced evidence that he professed to teach the Christian religion, which we thought to be a moral system, and that the persons whose taxes were in consideration attended upon him as a teacher of morality, and were content to submit the cause. Upon the other side, they moved to prove that his doctrines were opposed to morality because he denied punishment in another world. To this we objected that, although we were obliged to prove him a teacher of morality, yet they would not go so far as to bring before a civil tribunal the question whether the motives of rewards and punishments in another world were such as would induce piety; for, should we at once launch into that inquiry, there would be no end to it. For, suppose the clergyman in suit was

an Episcopalian, one of the thirty-nine articles might be produced against him which, perhaps, he had sworn to, holding up the idea of election and reprobation, which would be deemed by those who dissented from the doctrine to be opposed to every incentive to virtue or determent from vice. All Calvinists were involved in the same observation; the Hopkintonians worse, still worse; and it might even be said of the Armenians that their distinction between foreknowledge and predestination was derogatory to the perfection of the Deity; and so no end could be had to the disquisition. The court were, however, against us, and in summing up or rather arguing the cause, gave it as their full opinion that no teacher but one who was elected by a corporate society could recover money paid by his hearers to the teacher of the parish. This excludes, you will observe, the Episcopalians, Baptists, Quakers, Presbyterians, and Sandemanians from all benefit arising from the third article. The jury thought otherwise, and gave us a verdict. John Tracy, foreman." [1]

This verdict being in direct opposition to the instructions of the court, a review of the case was ordered, and the final trial was had the following June.

Before that time arrived the Universalists published an octavo pamphlet of thirty-nine pages entitled, "An Appeal to the Impartial Public by the Society of Christian Independents, congregating in Glocester." It was written by Epes Sargent, and contained a full statement of the facts and arguments in the case, as based on the Constitution of the Commonwealth. It was immediately followed by a pamphlet of twenty-three pages, entitled, "An Answer to a Piece entitled 'An Appeal to the Impartial Publick,' by an Association calling themselves 'Christian

[1] Amory's Life of James Sullivan, vol. i. p. 183.

Independents in Glocester.'" It was probably written by Samuel Whittemore, Esq., the agent of the First Parish. In addition to the common arguments of that day against allowing churches to be founded in opposition to the regular parish organization, this pamphlet contains the letter of Rev. Dr. Stiles, before alluded to, in which Mr. Murray is denounced as "a consummate hypocrite; at best a man of duplicity and dubiousness of conduct." He represents Mr. Murray as having told him that the plan he had projected in coming to America

"was this: to come here as a follower of Mr. Whitfield, and here to make himself known to him, by reminding him of his communicating at the Tabernacle, and then request Mr. Whitfield to put him in some secular employment at the Orphan House in Georgia; for, he said, he never had preached in England, and had no thoughts of it here, except that he had sometimes spoken or exhorted in some of the small Westlean societies before he was eighteen years old. Upon coming here his plan was broken up, as Mr. Whitfield died a few weeks before or after his arrival. I have been informed of some of his ludicrous and jocund conversation while on the passage, respecting what business he should follow here, intimating his readiness to go upon the stage, or, etc., etc.; indicating an undetermined and an unprincipled adventurer, ready, indifferently, to turn himself to any course. Being shipwrecked on the Jersey shore, he was received with hospitality by an opulent Presbyterian who had built a meeting-house there for travelling ministers, especially those sent by the synods. Mr. Murray here offered himself first to preach. . . . He is unstudied and undigested in his own scheme. At first he laughed at a literal hell, and denied all future misery. Afterwards he allowed some future punishment, but denies the

eternity of it, and goes into the popish doctrine of purgatory. In short, he is to this day unsettled in his scheme, — a scheme infinitely dangerous to morality. When he visited me, I asked his opinion respecting his supposed tenet of universal salvation. But he positively denied it to me, and asserted both the reality and perpetuity of the future misery and damnation of those of the human race who should be found on the left hand of Jesus; and, he said, a number of mankind would be found on the left hand of Jesus at the great day. . . . It is said that once after supper he talked ludicrously of the Lord's Supper as being only like drinking a health unto the memory of an absent friend, and profanely said, Here is bread and here is wine, what forbids but we should have it now? One of the company replied, Several things forbid it; in order to a due partaking or administering of that holy ordinance, there were two things necessary, viz., proper subjects, and a proper person to administer it; neither of which, says he, do I know to be here. Murray replied, they were fit subjects, and he, or any other person, had power, etc.; and so it ended. Mr. Murray denies all this with certain artful duplicity or coverings; but I had it from the mouth of one of the gentlemen present, and do not doubt the fact. Indeed, it is said by others that now he talks lightly about outward ordinances" (pp. 9–11).

The pamphlet closes with a short address to the public, in which occurs the following: —

"This town, once the seat of peace and commerce, is now nodding on the brink of ruin, owing chiefly, if not entirely, to this association, headed by this foreigner, who, through a too great indulgence, has acquired the effrontery to claim equal privileges with the learned, regular, and ordained ministers of this Commonwealth;

assuming their title, he sues for support. If this association should be supported by law, then any one, two, or three families may form themselves into the same, and claim the same privileges. What then will become of our colleges, incorporated parishes, and churches? . . . It is the opinion of the most judicious and feeling hearts among us, that this man and his pernicious doctrines have been more damage to this town than the late war" (p. 22).

To this pamphlet Mr. Murray at once replied, over his own signature, in a broadside published as a supplement to the "Salem Gazette." Of the attack of Dr. Stiles he said: —

"The public will be very much surprised when they find that on the Rev. Dr. Stiles' writing to the Rev. Mr. Forbes, I repeatedly requested a copy of the libel; and not being able to obtain it, I set out for Portsmouth. I there demanded a meeting with the Doctor, insisting on his either proving or retracting the false and scandalous reports he sent his reverent correspondent in that letter; but, though under the influence of prejudice, that bane of society, he was able to propagate a falsehood, yet (to his honor be it spoken) he had not courage enough to defend them. No arguments made use of by his best friends could bring him to my face. He told them, indeed, that he was sure he said no *harm* of me, and that if he had said anything to my disadvantage, he was ready to ask my pardon; that he wrote to Mr. Forbes in confidence, not expecting that I would ever hear of it. All this, and much more to the same purpose, can be attested by the most respectable characters who waited on him on the occasion.

"The public will be astonished, almost as much as I

was, when they find the story the Doctor has furnished his reverend friend with respecting my treating the sacrament irreverently, was, ten years ago, proved to him by the best and most respectable authorities a gross and palpable falsehood. One of the Doctor's best friends, a Mr. Belcher, made it his business to inquire into the affair; and when he had found me fully justified, on the respectable authority of General Greene, a letter from the present Governor's lady of Rhode Island, Mr. Gordon, a minister in East Greenwich, and General Varnum, who were all present on the occasion where it was said I thus burlesqued the sacrament, he informed Dr. Stiles of it; but though the Doctor had this information, he still, in private, to help a good cause, continued to propagate the lie. And many years after this, when he wrote it to Mr. Forbes, this same Mr. Belcher, impelled by a love of truth and justice, wrote a letter to Mr. Forbes to convince him of the falsehood of this slander. This letter Mr. Forbes did not think proper to publish; a copy of it, however, can be produced at a moment's warning.

"But the limits of your paper will not admit my tracing my calumniators through the whole of the dirty path they have taken; the public may form some judgment of the credits which ought to be given to the rest of their vile calumnies from the specimen now laid before them; and I can in this way only declare that I am able and willing, at any time when properly called on, to prove the rest of the charges they have exhibited equally false as slanderous.

"When we ventured to lodge an appeal before the bar of the impartial public we did not call on them to attend the sacrifice of any individual's reputation; we made use of no personal invectives, we did not aim at poisoning the minds of our fellow-citizens with prejudice, imposing on them by vile misrepresentations; we were prevented from thus acting by motives which, we trust,

will always have weight with us, viz., the fear of God, a respect for the public, and a regard for ourselves.

. . . . . .

"On the whole, it is plain what our enemies aim at: they hope that personal abuse and a collection of infamous falsehoods will so far operate on the minds of the court and jury (under God the only defenders of our natural and constitutional rights and liberties) as to gain a verdict in their favor. And the plain intent of their address is this: 'Our fellow-citizens, we call on you to assist us in reprobating those wicked wretches who, not having the fear of God, will not quietly part with their property to us. We desire you not to look on such wretches as fellow-citizens; God hates them, we hate them, and we hope you will hate them. We are holy, righteous, just, and good; they are the reverse of all this. We are God's own children; they are children of the devil. You ought, therefore, to believe all we say, but nothing that they say. We have a right to choose our own teacher; they have not. No law ought to oblige us to support any other than we hear, but the law ought to oblige them to support the minister they do not hear. You ought to give us their money for nothing, and when they are base enough to refuse to part with it freely, and we send a constable to take away their property, you ought never to afford them any redress; for if you do not oblige them to pay our teacher, what will become of your colleges, your parishes, your country! The rising generation, — all, all will go to destruction, if you do not oblige them to support our teacher.'

"However, had these gentlemen confined themselves to argument, and endeavored to prove that a doctor had a right to demand a fee from another doctor's patient; a lawyer from another lawyer's client; a minister from another minister's hearers, — the press was free, they had a right to offer their reasons; but when, as defenders

of the faith, they strive by bitter invectives to rob us, first of our reputation, in order to influence a jury to enable them to rob us of our property, and thus, in a pretended zeal for piety and morality, bear false witness against their neighbor, surely every thinking, unprejudiced person must see their conduct in its true light, and detest it."

At the final hearing of the case in June, 1786, Mr. Murray was on a preaching tour in the State of Connecticut. Mrs. Murray has preserved in the memoir of her husband the following extract from a letter announcing to him the result: —

"Last Tuesday our party with their cloud of witnesses were present, and called out at the bar of the supreme judicial court. The cause was opened by Mr. Bradbury and replied to by Mr. Hitchborne. The court adjourned to the succeeding morning. I arrived just in season to hear it taken up by Mr. Parsons and closed by Mr Sullivan. I wish for an opportunity to render my acknowledgments to this gentleman. He displayed upon this day an eloquence not less than Roman. The judges summed up the whole. The first was ambiguous, the second was so trammelled and inarticulate as to be scarcely understood; but the remaining three have acquired a glory which will be as lasting as time. The conduct of Judge Dana attracted particular notice. You remember he heretofore labored against us. There appeared a disposition to traverse our counsel; in his comments on the Constitution, those parts which made for us he turned against us; he asserted the tax was not persecuting, but legal; religious societies were bodies corporate, or meant to be so; sect and denomination were promiscuously used and synonymous; and the whole was delivered with a sententious gravity, the result of faculties laboriously cultivated by

experience and study. But a revolution had now passed in his mind, and when he noticed that article in the Constitution which directs moneys to be applied to the teacher of his own religious sect, he said the whole cause depended upon the construction of that clause. He had heretofore been of opinion it meant teachers of bodies corporate; he then thought otherwise. As the Constitution was meant for a liberal purpose, its construction should be of a most liberal kind. It meant in this instance teachers of any persuasion whatever, Jew or Mahometan. It would be for the jury to determine if Mr. Murray was a teacher of piety, religion, and morality. That matter, he said, had, in his opinion, been fully proved. The only question, therefore, before them was, if Mr. Murray came within the description of the Constitution, and had a right to require the money. 'It is my opinion,' he decidedly declared, 'that Mr. Murray comes within the description of the Constitution, and has a right to require the money.' The jury received the cause, and departed the court at half-past three. In the evening they returned with a declaration that *they could not agree.* The chief judge with some asperity ordered them to take the papers and go out again. They continued in deliberation through the whole night. Thursday morning they came in again, declaring their unanimous agreement that the judgment obtained the preceding year was in *nothing erroneous.* Thus have we gained our cause, after trials of such expectation and severity. We rejoice greatly. 'It is the Lord's doings, and marvellous in our eyes'" (pp. 335, 336).

It is said that when the jury were sent out the last time,

"the foreman made an earnest appeal for Mr. Murray, urging that his supporters had as good a right to worship God according to the dictates of conscience as others had,

and that he was prepared to render a verdict accordingly. He then composed himself to sleep, with the remark that they might arouse him as soon as they could agree."

The narrator of this incident also says: —

"Tradition has handed down the following incident connected with this trial. Mr. Giddings, a Quaker, was on the stand to testify that Mr. Murray's supporters had a house of worship. It had been objected against them that they had a secret which, in the state of public affairs at that time, might be dangerous to the liberties of the people. Mr. Giddings, being questioned on this point, and pressed rather closely, at length answered, 'Yes, they have a secret, and it is this (quoting Ps. xxv. 14): "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant." They have no other secret, to my knowledge.'" [1]

The cost of this suit to Mr. Murray's supporters is not known, but the amount paid by the First Parish to their agent was, in small sums from 1783 to 1788, a total of seventy-five pounds five shillings and fourpence; not much of it itemized, as voted by the parish committee, but one item, passed on at their meeting, March 23, 1787, reading thus: —

"Twenty-four pounds, it being what he [Samuel Whittemore] gave his note for to Theophilus Bradbury and Theophilus Parsons, Esqrs., on interest, dated June, 1786, as their fees in behalf of the parish." [2]

During the progress of this trial Mr. Murray did not relax his industry and zeal in the work of the ministry. His wife says in the memoir that he

[1] History of the Town of Gloucester, by John J. Babson, p. 435.
[2] Parish Committee Records, p. 120.

"continued uniformly to devote the summer months to his multiplied adherents, from Maryland to New Hampshire. In what manner is copiously described in his 'Letters and Sketches of Sermons.' In the February of 1783, we find the preacher, as usual, deeply interested in the cause of his great Master, and suggesting in a letter to his friend and fellow-laborer, Mr. Noah Parker, the propriety of an annual meeting of the heralds of redemption. His words are: 'Indeed, it would gladden my heart if every one who stands forth a public witness of the truth *as it is in Jesus*, could have an opportunity of seeing and conversing one with another at least once every year. I believe it would be attended with very good effects. Think of it, my friend, and let me know the result of your deliberation. I think these servants of the Most High might assemble one year at Norwich, one year at Boston, and another at Portsmouth, or wherever it may be most convenient. I have long contemplated an association of this description; and the longer I deliberate, the more I am convinced of the utility which would be annexed to the regulation'" (pp. 336, 337).

In the summer of 1783 he visited Philadelphia, and held his first interview with Rev. Elhanan Winchester, — to be more fully described in another place. During this absence from home he visited Good Luck, but Thomas Potter was not there to greet him, having departed this life in April, 1782. In his will, dated May 11, 1777, and proved May 2, 1782, he thus disposed of the house of worship: —

"The house I built for those that God shall cause to meet there to serve or worship Him [I devote] to the same use still, and I will that my dear friend, John Murray, preacher of the gospel, shall have the sole direction and

management of said house, and one acre of land where the house now stands for the use above mentioned."[1]

In his "Letters and Sketches," vol i. pp. 334–341, Mr. Murray thus describes this, probably his last, visit to his first American home: —

"My ride to this place has been very disagreeable, — the heat so intense, and the sand so deep, and no hospitable Friend Potter in view. Dear, honored friend, the first patron with which I was blessed in this New World, how indulgent wert thou to me! with how much benevolence didst thou cherish me when a stranger in thy mansion, and how didst thou labor for my advancement!

"Many aged persons who were in the habit of attending my labors have visited me. They express their honest sensibility in a variety of ways, but all are overjoyed to see me. They are solicitous to pour into my ear the story of their accumulated sufferings. They imagine they shall reap pleasure from commiseration. Yet what, alas, can helpless pity do! There is, however, much pleasure in communicating our sorrows to a sympathizing friend.

"I am now in the house that once belonged to the venerable Potter, to my friend Potter. I am not, however, an occupant of the same apartment which he fitted up for my use and directed me to consider as my own. That apartment, and the greater part of the house, is devoted to those who loved not him and knew not me. Alas! what is this world? How often we thus exclaim, thus ask, because we imagine it is not what it should be. Were it under our direction it would be better managed, but it is not, nor ever will be. One thing is certain, — on life there is little or no dependence. This dear man,

[1] From the official copy in the Secretary of State's Office, Trenton, N. J., Liber N. 24, pp. 117, 118.

this American 'MAN OF ROSS,' was suddenly snatched from the scenes of time, deprived instantly of reason, and, in a few hours, of life. 'His soul proud science never taught to stray.' But he was a gem of the first quality, and notwithstanding the crust, which from his birth enfolded him, yet by the rubs he suffered from the pebbles among which he was placed, this crust was so far broken as to emit, upon almost every occasion, the native splendor of his intellect. Had this man in early life received the culture of Nature's handmaid, what a luminous figure he would have made! But the God of nature had stamped upon his soul the image of himself, — *unbounded benevolence.*

"I reached this place yesterday evening. The sun was just setting, and as I passed through the well-known fields and saw them rich and flourishing in all the pride of nature, I felt an irrational kind of anger grow at my heart, that those fields should look so exceeding gay when their master had taken an everlasting leave of every terrestrial scene. The depression upon my spirits, as I reached the house, was indescribable. I beheld one and another whose faces I had never before seen. An ugly mastiff growled at me as I passed; and this is the first time, said I, that I was ever growled at in this place by any of thy kind; but he was soon silenced by a lad who was brought up by my friend. 'Lord bless me! Is not this Mr. Murray?' — 'Why, Matt, do you remember me?' — 'Remember you, sir! Remember Mr. Murray? Yes, indeed, sir.' — 'This dog does not, Matt!' — 'But he would if he had lived in master's time; but he is a stranger.' — 'They are all strangers, Matt, are they not?' — 'Indeed they are, all but my mistress and myself.' — 'And where is your mistress, Matt?' — 'I will call her, sir.' — 'No, my good lad, not yet. What have you for my horse?' — 'Nothing but grass.' — 'Nothing at Mr. Potter's but grass?' — 'Ah, sir, it is not now the

house of Mr. Potter.' — 'True, true, true! Leave me, my good lad, leave me.'

"I walked round the house, entered every avenue, looked at my garden, — it was made for me. The trees, the flowering shrubs, have run wild, and the whole surface of the spot is covered with weeds. This pleased me; just so I would have it.

"This is the tree planted by my own hand. How flourishing! But where is the other, planted directly opposite at the same moment by my friend? Alas! like its planter, dead. On this very spot I first saw the philanthropist. 'Can you assist me, sir?' — 'Yes, sir.' — 'On what terms?' — 'I receive no payment, sir. He who gave to me did not charge me anything; you are welcome at the price.' Here our acquaintance commenced; but it is ended, at least in the present state. I shall see him no more on this side eternity. On this seat we sat, and there the tear of transport rolled down his furrowed cheek when we conversed upon that redemption which is in Christ Jesus. Under that oak we have frequently sat, contemplating the shadow from the heat, the hiding-place from the storm. At yonder gate he bid me farewell, and wiped his venerable eye. At yonder gate I turned; he waved his hand, — 'God Almighty bless you; you will come again. Forget not your friends, your ancient friend.' — 'If I do,' said my heart, 'may my right hand forget its cunning!' But I forgot thee, good old man, too long I forgot thee! And now that I am at last returned, thou art not here to bid me in the politest, that is, in the sincerest manner, welcome.

"Mrs. Potter approached. She lifted up her hands and eyes in speechless anguish, seated herself, changed color, — no matter, the worst is passed. I have visited the meeting-house reared by his hand for the worship of his God. It is embosomed in a grove of stately oaks, all trimmed, and in beautiful order. Under this shade re-

poseth the man by whom the house was raised, by whom the grove was planted. I beheld his grave. It was not a marble, a *hard marble*, that informed me whose dust lay there; it was a feeling mechanic who, having experienced much kindness from the deceased, wept when he told me that spot contained the dead. I carefully examined the grave to see if any weeds grew there. No, no, they had no business there. I could not pluck a noxious nettle from *his* grave. There grew upon it a few wild flowers, emblematic of the mind that once inhabited this insensate clay. At the foot of the grave stands the most majestic and flourishing of all the oaks which surround the grave. It was once on the point of falling a sacrifice to the axe-man, but my friend solicited for its continuance, pronouncing that it would flourish when he should sleep beside it. And having thus rescued it, added my informant, he has since paid it particular attention, which is the reason of its so far surpassing the other trees.

"Peace, peace to thy spirit, thou friendly, feeling, faithful man! Thy dust is laid up to rest near the house thou didst build for God, but thy spirit rests *with God* in the house built by *him for thee;* and though our dust may not meet again, our spirits will meet and rejoice together in those regions of blessedness where pain can find no entrance, where death can no more usurp dominion, where no tear of sorrow shall ever dim the joy-brightened eye, for we shall part no more forever. I said there was no nettle on this grave. One thing, however, was very remarkable. A gourd had crept along until it came to, and spread over, his grave, mixing its foliage with the sweet-scented flowers that grew thereon.

"Never was place better calculated for melancholy musing than this spot, so thick the grove around. The little neat graveyard at the end, the shutters of the house for public worship all closed up, the lonely situation inviting the birds, — their music serves to mellow

the scene; all, all, is *most truly* for solemn meditation fit.

"In this house of worship I have once more preached. It is full two years since divine service has been performed there. I selected for my subject 1 Corinthians vi. 20: 'For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.'"

At the close of this sermon Mr. Murray adverted in the following terms to the character of Mr. Potter: —

"Through yonder open casement I behold the grave of a man, the recollection of whom swells my heart with gratitude, and fills my eyes with tears. There sleeps the sacred dust of him who well understood the advantages resulting from the public worship of the true God. There rest the ashes of him who glorified God in his body, and in his spirit, which he well knew were the Lord's. He believed he was bought with a price, and therefore he declared that all he was and had were righteously due to the God who had created and purchased him with a price all price beyond. There rests the precious dust of the friend of strangers, whose hospitable doors were ever open to the destitute and him who had none to relieve his sufferings. I myself was once thrown on these shores, a desolate stranger. This Christian man brought me to his habitation. 'God,' said he, 'hath blessed me; he has given me more than a competency, and he has given me a heart to devote myself and all that I have to him. I have built a place for his name and worship. I would,' continued the faithful man, 'erect this temple myself with what God had given me. My neighbors would have lent their aid, but I refused assistance from any one. I would myself build the house, that God might be worshipped without contention, without interruption; that he might be worshipped by all whom he should vouchsafe to send.'

"This elegant house, my friends, the first friends who hailed my arrival in this country, this elegant house, with its adjoining grove, is yours. The faithful founder bequeathed it to me that none of you may be deprived of it. His dust reposes close to this monument of his piety; he showed you by his life what it was to glorify God in body and spirit; and he has left you this house that you may assemble here together, listen to the voice, and unite to chant the praises of the God who created, who has bought you with a price, and who will preserve you.

"Dear, faithful man! when last I stood in this place he was present among the assembly of the people. I marked his glistening eye; it always glistened at the emphatic name of Jesus. Even now I behold in imagination his venerable countenance; benignity is seated on his brow; his mind is apparently open and confiding; tranquillity reposeth upon his features, and the expression of each varying emotion evinceth that faith which is the parent of enduring peace, of that peace which passeth understanding.

"Let us, my friends, imitate his philanthropy, his piety, his charity. I may never again meet you until we unite to swell the loud hallelujahs before the throne of God. But to hear of your faith, of your perseverance, of your brotherly love, of your works of charity, will heighten my enjoyments and soothe my sorrows, even to the verge of my mortal pilgrimage. Accept my prayers in your behalf, and let us unite to supplicate our common God and Father for the mighty blessing of his protection."

Thomas Potter left a large estate and, it was supposed, but a few debts. One of his executors, it is said, in collusion with another person, had many fraudulent claims presented, to meet which necessitated the sale of a portion of the estate, in which the meeting-house

property was included. The purchaser was a relative of the fraudulent executor, and on Nov. 7, 1809, for the consideration of one hundred and twenty-five dollars, he conveyed the property to Paul Potter, Samuel Woodmansie, John Crammer, Caleb Falkenburg, Isaac Rogers, John Tilton, and David Bennet, trustees; a clause of the deed reading as follows: —

"That they shall at all times forever hereafter permit such ministers and preachers belonging to the said church as shall from time to time be duly authorized by the General Conference of the ministers and preachers of the said Methodist Episcopal Church, or by the yearly conference authorized by the said General Conference, *and none others,* to preach and expound God's holy word therein."

The widow of Thomas Potter obtained a competent support in the settlement of the estate, but was induced by her husband's nephew to make over her property to him, he promising to give her a comfortable home during her life; but his property was wasted by mismanagement or misfortune, and the widow ended her days in the poorhouse.[1]

There were probably difficulties in the way of immediate action on Mr. Murray's suggestion for a Universalist Association, as made in the letter to Rev. Noah Parker in 1783, quoted a few pages back; but an organization effected in April, 1785, sought and secured this desired result. There were many Universalists in that part of Worcester County, Mass., comprised in the towns of Oxford, Charlton, Douglas, Sturbridge, Sutton,

[1] See the Ambassador, March 23, 1867, and the Christian Leader, vol. xliv. no. 46, Nov. 14, 1874.

and Ward (the latter now the town of Auburn), the result of the labors of Dr. Davis, Caleb Rich, and Adams Streeter, as before mentioned, some of whom united to form "The Second Religious Society in Oxford, and the Third Independent Religious Society in the Commonwealth, called Universalists." To them the issue of Mr. Murray's suit against the First Parish in Gloucester possessed great interest. Should he lose his case they would be seriously affected.

"We are duly sensible," they wrote to their Gloucester brethren, "that our strength depends on our being cemented together in one united body, in order to anticipate any embarrassment of our Constitutional Rights."

They therefore issued a call to the

"brethren at Gloucester, Boston, Taunton, Newport, Providence, and so forth, to form an association which we propose to be held at Oxford. Yet, as we wish to accommodate the societies at large, we have omitted to appoint a time till we shall hear from the brethren, and if any other place will better accommodate the brethren at large, we submit it for your advice."

This was issued July 21. A copy was sent to Providence by the hand of Rev. Adams Streeter, who was instructed to explain more fully the object of the proposed meeting. The answer went by the same hand, and the Oxford friends were informed that the proposed association was a

"measure they had reason to believe to be conducive to the well-being of government, especially in your State, under your present form of government; for which reason we shall heartily join you in such a measure, either by a committee or letters of correspondence on the matter.

As we are a very small and poor people here, we can be of but little weight in matters of such importance; nevertheless, observing your peculiar standing in government, we can but earnestly recommend [you] to be careful not to defend yourselves against oppression by oppressing, especially in matters of religion, but let your moderation be known to all men; for we know when the minds of men are irritated by undue measures, they are apt to swerve from the Golden Rule, — do as you would be done by. Having but little opportunity to write at this time, we shall let you know our mind more particularly by letter or committee at the time of meeting at Oxford, which time we shall leave to yourselves, and to notify us by letter."

A month later — the time for the meeting of the Association having been designated as Sept. 14 — the various societies were notified. Mr. Murray wrote to Noah Parker: —

"Although very much indisposed, I am commencing a journey to Oxford, where I expect to meet a number of our religious brethren from different towns in which the gospel has been preached and believed, for the purpose of deliberating upon some plan to defeat the designs of our enemies, who aim at robbing us of the liberty wherewith the Constitution has made us free."

Towards the last of September Mr. Murray again writes to Mr. Parker:

"Well, I have been to Oxford, and the assembly convened there was truly primitive. We deliberated, first, on a NAME; secondly, on the propriety of being united in our common defence; thirdly, upon the utility of an annual meeting of representatives from the different societies; and, fourthly, upon keeping up a constant cor-

respondence by letter. Each of the particulars is to be laid before the societies represented by their delegates on this occasion, and if approved, their approbation to be announced by circular letters to the several societies."

There were present at this Association nine laymen, representing the following localities: Boston, Providence, Milford, Bellingham, and Taunton. The ministers in attendance were John Murray, Gloucester; Caleb Rich, Warwick; Adams Streeter, Milford, and Elhanan Winchester, Philadelphia. The latter preached a sermon, but probably did not participate in the deliberations, at least not as a representative from Philadelphia, for he had not been appointed by the believers in that city, but was, in company with his half-brother Moses, spending a year in New England. The name agreed upon by the Association to be recommended to the several congregations for their adoption, was "Independent Christian Society, commonly called 'Universalists.'" They

"voted that each of the committees from Boston, and so forth, shall convey to their several societies, together with the name adopted, a proposal to consider the propriety of each society's agreeing not only to be called by one name, but to be cemented in one body, consequently bound by the ties of love to assist each other at any and all times when occasion shall require."

They also voted to

"propose to their constituents the propriety of an annual meeting, and that the first be held in Boston the second Wednesday in September, 1786."

They also unanimously voted to adopt as the form of organization for their respective societies a "Charter of

Compact," which had recently (September 6) been drafted and adopted by the Gloucester Universalists, as remedying some of the defects in the former "Articles of Association." It was undoubtedly laid before the Association by Mr. Murray, and after a few slight alterations, was adopted in the following form: —

"CHARTER OF COMPACT.

"As it is of the greatest importance, and conduces to the safety and happiness of a Society, to form themselves in a way which is most happifying and secure in the great matters of Religion and Morality, and to take all such salutary measures as are pointed out in the Constitution, we therefore, who have set our names hereunto, convinced by reason and truth, do by our own inclination mutually engage and pledge ourselves, each to the other, and enter into the following Charter of Compact.

"1. That there be a stated annual meeting of the Society on the second Wednesday in April every year, for the purpose of choosing a select committee, whose power shall be as hereafter defined, and that there be at the same time a clerk chosen to this Society.

"2. That there be funds provided by voluntary subscription for the purpose of supporting a teacher or teachers of Piety, Religion, and Morality, and for the purpose of assisting poor and distressed brethren.

"3. The powers of the Committee are to extend to the calling of a meeting or meetings of the Society, when they shall think proper, or on request of five of the Society.

"4. They have power to admit new subscribers: they shall likewise acquaint the Clerk of their proceedings, in order that he may keep a regular record.

"5. The Clerk shall record the transactions both of the

Society and Committee in a book open to the inspection of any one.

"6. The Clerk shall be Treasurer of the Society, and shall regularly report both of the reception and distribution of moneys to the Compact at every annual meeting.

"7. All who shall subscribe and not punctually pay, shall be exempt from the privileges of the Charter of Compact, and the Compact have discretionary power to remit subscriptions on reasonable representations made to them.

"8. The subscriptions shall be paid to the Clerk, which will render useless the office of a Collector.

"9. Subscriptions shall be opened at the annual meetings, and continue at those periods, unless any circumstances shall require them more frequently.

"10. All subscribers shall have an equal vote.

"11. All questions shall be determined by two thirds of the present members, and seven shall constitute a meeting.

"12. Every member or subscriber shall have a free liberty to withdraw his name from this Charter whenever he shall see fit.

"13. Whereas the privilege of choosing one's own religion is inestimable, in order to maintain that privilege unimpaired, in case any person associating with us shall suffer persecution from an unlawful exercise of power, we do agree and resolve to afford all legal measures of extricating him from difficulty, and of enabling him to enjoy that freedom which is held forth in the Constitution.

"14. And be it universally known, that we who have set our names to this Charter of Compact for the purposes heretofore named, are composed of, and belong to, the Independent Christian Society in ———, commonly called *Universalists*." [1]

[1] For other papers relating to this Association, see the Universalist Quarterly for July, 1874, pp. 328–344.

In a short time this compact was adopted by the societies in Milford, Oxford, and Warwick. The friends in Boston wrote that they believed it to be their duty to consider themselves "of one body, of which Jesus Christ is the Head," but did not announce their intention to organize in just the way, nor under the particular name, that had been designated. It is probable that they had an organization of some kind before the meeting of the Association, although no records are found of an earlier date than Jan. 1, 1786. They purchased a house of worship in October, 1785. The date of that purchase is generally given as December 29, but a letter of John Murray, dated Nov. 5, 1785, says: —

"Our friends in this place have made last week a very great purchase. They have bought Doctor Mather's meeting-house that was, — a very elegant, commodious house."

This house was a wooden structure and was erected in 1742 by the adherents of Rev. Samuel Mather, D. D., who, after being pastor of the Old North Church for about nine years, was by his own request dismissed in 1741. With him "about thirty men and twice as many women separated from the Old North" and established a new society. Their house of worship was built on the corner of North Bennet and Hanover streets. The society was unable to continue after Dr. Mather's death, hence the sale of their property to the Universalists.

The Providence friends said, in a letter to the Oxford Society, Nov. 27, 1785, that

"a copy of the proceedings of the Association held in Oxford on the 14th of September last, and a copy of the

Charter of Compact (so called) agreed to by the members of said society at Oxford, have been laid before a meeting of a small number of us in this town, who have agreed to distinguish ourselves for the present by the name of *The Providence Universalists.*"

It is probable that there was no definite organization in this place. As we have seen in the preceding chapter, meetings were held as opportunity for preaching allowed, which, under the circumstances, especially after the death of Mr. Streeter, must have made their gatherings very infrequent, and their organization probably amounted to no more than this, — that for the purposes of correspondence one of their number was appointed clerk. This was Zephaniah Andrews, to whom, on the 9th of June, 1786, Mr. Winchester sent the following letter from Philadelphia: —

"My dear friends in Providence, whom I love in the truth, for the truth's sake which dwelleth in us, and shall be in us forever.

"I send my sincere affection to you all, remembering your kindnesses and friendly offices to us when we were with you; for when we were strangers you took us in, when we were hungry you fed us, when we were thirsty you gave us drink, when we were sick you ministered to us; and I doubt not but if we had been naked you would have clothed us, and had we been in prison you would have come unto us. I pray that my God would supply all your needs, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. He is rich, though I am poor; and He is able to reward you manifold according to your labor of love; for God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, and our Saviour assures us that not a cup of cold water (even though given only in the name of a disciple) shall lose its reward.

"And now, dear friends, stand fast in the truth which ye have heard, and be not turned aside therefrom by any cunning craftiness of men whereby they lie in wait to deceive. Endeavor to grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of Christ Jesus our Lord, till you come to his kingdom and glory.

"I heartily salute you, friends Eddy, Waterman, Hill, Gladding, Andrews, Sisson, and all other my friends whose names I cannot mention in particular.

"I rest yours, etc.

"ELHANAN WINCHESTER."

The persons named in the above were all men of good standing in the community, but we have no particulars respecting many of them. Esek Eddy was a ship-carpenter by trade, and a man of great amiability and goodness. Early in life he became a member of the Beneficent Congregational Church, under the pastorate of Rev. Mr. Snow. During one of the earliest visits of John Murray to Providence he preached in Rev. Mr. Snow's meeting-house, and there Mr. Eddy heard him and believed the message to which he listened. The church summoned him to trial for his heresy, and when he was requested to offer what he might wish to in defence of his course, he simply repeated the apostolic words, "We both labor and suffer reproach because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe." The trial resulted in a resolution to excommunicate, which was carried out publicly, the heretic being required to stand in the broad aisle and listen to the reading of his sentence, and of an anathema giving him over to the buffetings of Satan. So great, however, was the purity of his

life, and so faithful his discharge of all religious obligations, that the church solicited his return to its communion. He made answer that he would cheerfully do so if they would receive him back as publicly as they put him out. This they refused to do, and he remained the Lord's freeman. He died in 1820, in the enjoyment and triumph of Christian faith, aged 89 years.

Rufus Waterman was a soap and candle maker. "He was never a man of show, was rather a Quaker in his habits, lived respectably, but unostentatiously; was not loquacious; but he was honest, benevolent, and wealthy. 'Honest as Rufus Waterman,' was a proverb in Providence." Mr. Waterman was originally a Baptist, and a member of the First Baptist Church several years; but about 1780 he became a Universalist, at which time he either withdrew or was excommunicated from the church. He lived to an advanced age, and was one of the incorporators of the first Universalist Society in Providence in 1821.

At Milford an organization had been effected before the meeting of the Association, the records showing who were the members of the society in August, 1785. Of the early labors in that region mention has been made in a preceding chapter. At Bellingham there was no organization, nor was there any in Taunton, nor in Newport, East Greenwich, and Cumberland, R. I., although there were a number of believers in each of these places who were eager to hear the preached word as often as opportunity offered.

Of Rev. Elhanan Winchester, who preached at Oxford during the session of the Association, it is impossible to speak with justice within narrow limits. He was a

man of peculiar gifts and of wonderful and commanding influence. He was the oldest of fifteen children of Elhanan Winchester, a respectable and industrious mechanic, and was born in Brookline, Mass., Sept. 30, 1751. At the age of five he could read with fluency, it was said, anything then printed in the English language. He learned rapidly, and had a retentive memory, devoured with avidity all books that came in his way; but of all that he read, the Bible was his favorite companion. From this early and extensive acquaintance with the Scriptures his friends naturally predicted his future eminence and usefulness.

"He was of a contemplative turn, which, connected with his Scriptural attainments, probably laid the foundation of that religious character for which in subsequent life he was pre-eminently distinguished."

Owing to his restricted circumstances, the elder Mr. Winchester was unable to do anything for the education of his children, beyond affording them the then meagre advantages of the district school. "But the mind of Elhanan rose superior to circumstances. His thirst for learning was irrepressible." When a Latin grammar was placed in his hands he qualified himself in one evening, to the agreeable surprise of his teacher, to recite with a class which had been studying several weeks; and the same energetic and persevering spirit enabled him in later years to acquire no mean knowledge of Hebrew, Greek, and French.

"In his constitution, Elhanan was naturally feeble. Through life he was the almost constant subject of disease and pain. He developed in childhood an amiable disposition, and a mild, conciliating temper. 'I have no

recollection of seeing him in a passion (writes a brother) while living with my father.' 'He always made it a rule (writes another) never to speak evil of any person. . . . Indeed, he seemed an entire stranger to envy, and was no less remarkable for his humility than his generosity.' Mr. Vidler, in his sketch, makes a less favorable statement of his youthful characteristics, on the authority, as he says, of Mr. Winchester himself. It was natural that a man like him should speak of himself with great modesty; but as his brothers and sister unite in ascribing to him an unusual sweetness of mind, we have chosen to follow them. So far as can be learned from contemporaries, their statements may be relied on as substantially correct. Gentleness, forbearance under the pressure of injury, and a tender regard for the feelings of others, were prominent features in his juvenile character. The early activity of his mind, and the readiness with which it embraced simultaneously a variety of subjects, is pertinently illustrated in the following anecdote. It was received in substance from reputable authority.

"His father was exemplary in the observance of the Sabbath. He considered it holy time, and wisely taught his children to regard it reverentially. He was constant in his attendance upon public worship, and always impressed upon his young family the duty of order and attention in the house of God. To secure this end he sometimes required them to remember the text and repeat it to him on their return from meeting. 'Elhanan,' said his father to him one pleasant Sabbath morning, 'you will attend meeting to-day; I wish you to keep your eyes upon the minister, and inform me, when you come home, from what part of the Scripture he selected his text.' 'Yes, father,' was the reply. At the hour of service the family set out for the place of worship. The meeting-house, like many of that day, was in an unfinished state;

the posts, beams, braces, and rafters being exposed to view. The old gentleman, as usual, took his seat below; but Elhanan, escaping for a moment his observation, slipped into the gallery, and placed himself in a front seat. It was now too late to call him down without disturbing the congregation, and as he sat in full view of his father, he concluded to allow him to remain undisturbed. The meeting was opened in the customary form, and the clergyman soon rose and commenced his sermon. The father now raised his eyes to his son, hoping to find him regarding the morning injunction. To his sorrow and vexation, however, Elhanan appeared entirely to have forgotten it. Instead of attending to the discourse, his mind seemed to be busily occupied with objects in distant parts of the house. The old gentleman was exceedingly uneasy, and resorted to various methods to arrest his attention without attracting the notice of the assembly, — but in vain. As the sermon progressed Elhanan became apparently more engrossed in the objects which first engaged his gaze. Occasionally he was observed to cast a look upon the speaker, as though the recollection of his father's charge flashed upon his mind; but soon his eyes again wandered over every part of the house, and he appeared insensible to the presence of any. His father was vexed beyond measure, and resolved to catechize him severely for his disobedience. The meeting at length closed, and the audience dispersed. As soon as the family reached home, the old gentleman commenced rather sternly: —

"'Elhanan, did I not bid you this morning to keep your eyes upon the minister, and bring me the text at noon?'

"'Yes, father.'

"'Why, then, have you disobeyed me?'

"'I have not disobeyed you, father,' replied Elhanan, looking up with a strong expression of innocence.

"'My son,' hastily rejoined his father, 'do not strive to conceal your fault by falsehood.'

"'Father, I am not guilty of falsehood.'

"'My child, do not persist in this assertion. I observed you narrowly during the whole of divine service, and your eyes were anywhere but upon the minister. You will not deny this?'

"'No, father, I will not deny that I sometimes looked upon other objects; but indeed I have not been disobedient, as you think. I remember the text.'

"'Indeed! repeat it then.' This was immediately done, citing chapter and verse.

"'Well,' resumed the father, 'I am glad that you have been more attentive than I at first supposed. It would have grieved me much had you convicted yourself of untruth. But, my son, I must caution you to refrain in future from gazing around the house of God. Such conduct indicates a want of just reverence for your Heavenly Father.'

"'I am heartily sorry, father, that my conduct has been censurable. I would not willingly give you pain, and I will try to behave more becoming in the house of God. But, father,' he continued, brightening, 'I not only remember the text, but I can tell you what the minister said.'

"He then enumerated the heads of the discourse, and repeated large portions nearly in the words of the speaker. The stern features of the father relaxed into a look of complacency as he remarked, 'Your memory, Elhanan, is very good, and I am pleased to observe that you have exercised it so profitably this morning.'

"'And now, father,' continued Elhanan, gathering courage from his altered tone, 'if you will not be offended, I will tell you the number of people present this morning, and the number of beams, posts, braces, rafters, and panes of glass there were in the meeting-house. I counted them all, and remembered the text too.'

"This was uttered in a tone of earnest simplicity that totally disarmed the old gentleman of his anger. The associations, too, were such as rendered it difficult to repress a smile; but, assuming a look of gravity, he replied: —

"'Well, Elhanan, I am willing to believe you meant no wrong. For this time I will overlook what, perhaps, under other circumstances, I should esteem an unpardonable offence. But be warned, my son, hereafter to give your undivided attention to the religious exercises while in the place of public worship.'" [1]

This wonderful power of concentration of will, and this ability to work without confusion on different lines of mental activity, was the secret of his success as a scholar under the disadvantages of his early life. The late Rev. Lemuel Willis, who obtained his information from his father, an intimate friend of Mr. Winchester's, relates the following, which occurred some years after Mr. Winchester became a Universalist preacher: —

"Though self-educated, his knowledge of languages and history was great. By an interview he had with the principal of the then new and flourishing academy in Chesterfield, N. H., Mr. Logan, a man of collegiate education and an accomplished scholar, he had his knowledge of the dead languages, so called, fully called out and tested.

"While in that village, after having preached there to that vast assemblage, Mr. Logan, who had heard of the fame of the distinguished preacher, if he had not listened to his spirit-stirring eloquence, desired to be introduced to him. This wish was soon gratified, and they met at the house of one of Mr. Winchester's friends. The conver-

[1] Biography of Rev. Elhanan Winchester, by Edwin Martin Stone, pp. 13–18.

sation soon turned upon the classics, and, especially, the original language of the New Testament. Mr. Logan taking the lead, they first spoke of the Latin poets and historians; and the preacher was found to be quite conversant with them. The former then turned to the Greek, thinking, perhaps, that a man who had not enjoyed the advantages of a collegiate course of study could have but little more than a smattering of that language. However, in this regard, too, he was mistaken. The latter showed that his knowledge of Grecian literature was very considerable, and particularly in relation to the Septuagint, and the original Greek of the New Testament. But at length Mr. Winchester thought it to be his turn to lead in the conversation, and he introduced the subject of the Hebrew language, and would have exchanged thought with Mr. Logan in relation to the original Scriptures of the Old Testament, but he was told at once by the preceptor that he had never learned that language, and knew nothing about it.

"Those who have read Winchester's 'Dialogues on the Universal Restoration,' and his 'Lectures on the Prophecies,' recollect that he often refers to the original Scriptures of the Bible, and this he did not without a knowledge of both the Hebrew and Greek languages."[1]

When nineteen years of age, Mr. Winchester united with a "Baptist church on the open communion plan," under the ministry of Elder Ebenezer Lyon, at Canterbury, Ct. Before the next spring he had removed to Rehoboth, Mass., where he spent a year as pastor of a Baptist church, over which he was ordained by Elder Lyon. At first his ministry was eminently successful, but before the year closed he had adopted the plan of close communion;

[1] The Universalist, Dec. 15, 1866.

"to which his church so far practically assented as to exclude him for breach of covenant. During the commotion which this affair produced at Rehoboth, he took a journey into New Hampshire and Vermont, and on returning, stopped at Grafton, Mass., where he preached to the astonishment of those that attended. When arrived at Rehoboth, finding the difficulties had not subsided, he called a council to mediate between him and his church. The result was the council declared he had left an error to embrace the truth; and the people declared the contrary. Accordingly, Mr. Winchester then joined the Baptist church in Bellingham, Mass., of which Elder Noah Alden was minister. About this time he renounced his Arminian sentiments, avowed the system of the celebrated Baptist, Dr. Gill, and soon became considered one of the most thorough Calvinist preachers in the country."

He continued preaching in various parts of Massachusetts till the autumn of 1774, when he took a journey to South Carolina, and became minister of the Baptist church at Welsh Neck, where he remained several years, making journeys, meanwhile, to New England and to Virginia. The steps by which he was led to the belief of Universalism, are best described by himself: —

"I think it was in the beginning of the year 1778, being in South Carolina, upon the River Pee Dee, where I was at that time minister, that I called to see a friend, who first put into my hands that valuable book written by Paul Siegvolk, and which is called 'The Everlasting Gospel,' of which I have lately published a new edition.[1] I was desired to tell what it meant to hold forth, as my

[1] Published at London, 1792.

friend could not tell by any means what to make of it, on account of the singularity and strangeness of the sentiments therein contained, although the language is very plain and clear, and by no means dark, mystical, or obscure.

"I opened the book as I was desired, and dipping into it here and there, for half an hour perhaps, was very soon able to tell what the author aimed at, namely, that there would be a final end of sin and misery, and that all fallen creatures would be restored by Jesus Christ to a state of holiness and happiness, after such as were rebellious had suffered in proportion to their crimes. I had never seen anything of the sort before in all my life; and I seemed struck with several ideas that I glanced over, — such as the inconsistency and impossibility of both good and evil always existing in the universe; and especially his observations upon the word *eternal* or *everlasting*, showing that it was used for what never had a beginning and would never have an end, as the being and perfections of God; and that it was also applied to things which had a beginning but should never have an end, — as the being and happiness of the righteous; and that it was also frequently used to express things, times, and seasons, which had both beginning and end, which he therefore called *periodical eternities*, and gave a great many instances of this sort which could not be denied; and he contended that the *everlasting punishment* threatened to the wicked, did not belong to the first nor to the second, but to the third class of these durations.

"But as I was only desired to tell what the author meant, when I had satisfied my friend in that respect, I laid the book down, and I believe we both concluded it to be a pleasant, ingenious hypothesis, but had no serious thoughts of its being true; and, for my part, I determined not to trouble myself about it, or to think any more of the matter. And as the book had been sent a

considerable distance for my friend to read, I suppose it was soon after sent back; for I saw it no more, nor heard anything further about it. The following summer I went a journey into Virginia, and happening to mention the subject to a minister there, he told me that a few days before it had been a subject of controversy in the public papers between a clergyman, who defended, and a gentleman of the law, who denied, the proper eternity of punishment; and he told me that this gentleman who denied it had advanced that the translators of the Bible had rendered the very same Greek word by very different English words, sometimes rendering it *forever*, and sometimes *world;* and that if they had uniformly rendered it by one English word, it would have been evident to all readers that no argument for *endless misery* could have been drawn therefrom. I was told also while I was in Virginia that a clergyman of the Episcopal Church had, a few years before, given out that he had some wonderful thing to make known to his hearers, which he would preach upon some Sunday, but he did not mention when. This raised the public curiosity, and great numbers attended his place of worship in hopes of hearing what this wonderful thing might be; but for a considerable time the matter was undiscovered. But at last he gave out that on the next Sunday he would open this great secret. Vast numbers of people flocked to hear what it could be. When he came to declare what it was, behold, it was a wonderful piece of news, indeed, such as had never been heard before in any pulpit in Virginia. It was nothing short of the doctrine of the *Restoration!* I think, to the best of my remembrance, they told me that he opened and enlarged upon it for two Sundays, and never preached any more, being immediately after seized with sickness which terminated in his death. And this was generally esteemed as a judgment that fell upon him for daring to preach such a wicked, false, and

dangerous opinion; and that God cut him off from the land of the living to testify his displeasure against him, and to terrify others from daring to follow his example, or believe his sentiments. But perhaps this might have been some worthy, pious, learned man, who had long concealed this grand truth in his heart, and had derived much satisfaction therefrom, and longed to proclaim it to others for their good; and, at last, notwithstanding the opposition that he might expect, resolved to do so, and accordingly was enabled, just before his time came to depart out of this world, to bear a faithful testimony to this most grand and important of all God's purposes. And having performed his duty, his Master called him to receive his reward, and gave him the plaudit of 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' [1]

"Sometime after I returned to South Carolina, a physician with whom I had been acquainted in Virginia came to live in the parish where I was minister; and among his books I found 'The Everlasting Gospel,' by Paul Siegvolk. This was the second copy that fell in my way, and I read a little more therein; but as yet had not the least thought that ever I should embrace its sentiments; yet some of his arguments appeared very conclusive, and I could not wholly shake them off, but I concluded to let them alone, and not investigate the matter; and therefore I never gave the book even so much as one cursory reading, till with great difficulty I procured one in the city of Philadelphia, more than two years afterwards.

"In the year 1779 I found myself much stirred up to exhort my fellow-creatures to repent, believe, and obey the gospel, and began to adopt a more open and gen-

[1] The reference here is doubtless to Rev. Robert Yancey, mentioned in the first chapter.

eral method of preaching than I had used for some years before, — having been deemed one of the most consistent Calvinists upon the continent, much upon the plan of Dr. Gill, whom I esteemed almost as an oracle. But now my heart being opened, and viewing the worth of souls, I felt great compassion towards them, and invited them with all my might to fly for mercy to the arms of Christ, who died for them, and who was willing to save them. I was gradually led into this way of preaching, without considering anything about its consistency with strict Calvinism; but finding myself ever happy and comfortable in my own mind, and that this method of preaching was highly useful, I continued to go on in the same course.

"About this time I begun to find uncommon desires for the conversion and salvation of the poor negroes, who were very numerous in that part of the country, but whom none of my predecessors, that I could learn, had ever taken pains to instruct in the principles of Christianity; neither had any single slave, either man or woman, been baptized until that summer in the whole parish (which was very large), that I ever heard of.

"The prejudices which the slaves had against Christianity on account of the severities practised upon them by professing Christians, — both ministers and people, — might be one principal reason why they could not be brought to attend to religious instruction. But they had no prejudice against me on this score, as I never had anything to do with slavery, but on the contrary, condemned it; and this, being pretty generally known, operated so upon the minds of those poor creatures that they showed a disposition to attend my ministry more than they had ever shown to any other. But still I never had addressed them in particular, and indeed had hardly any hopes of doing them good. But one evening, seeing a number of them at the door of the house where I was

preaching, I found myself constrained, as it were, to go to the door and tell them that Jesus Christ loved them, and died for them as well as for us white people, and that they might come and believe in him and welcome. And I gave them as warm and pressing an invitation as I could to comply with the glorious gospel. This short discourse addressed immediately to them, took greater effect than can be well imagined. There were about thirty from one plantation in the neighborhood present (besides others); these returned home, and did not even give sleep to their eyes, as they afterwards informed me, until they had settled every quarrel among themselves, and according to their form of marriage, had married every man to the woman with whom he lived; had restored whatever one had unjustly taken from another, and determined from that time to seek the Lord diligently. From that very evening they began constantly to pray to the Lord, and so continued, and he was found of them. I continued to instruct them, and within three months from the first of June, I baptized more than thirty blacks belonging to that plantation, besides many others, as in the whole made up one hundred, of whom sixty-three were men, thirty-seven were women, all of whom were born in Africa, or immediately descended from such as were natives of that unhappy country.

"My preaching was not only useful to the poor slaves, but also to great numbers of the white people, of whom I baptized, upon profession of repentance and faith in Christ, about one hundred and thirty-nine persons within the same space. This was a summer of great success, and I shall remember that happy season with pleasure while I live. This summer I received some farther dawnings of the day of the general restoration in my mind, for upon considering several Scriptures, such as these: 'He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant

justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities,' Isa. liii. 11. 'After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands,' Rev. vii. 9. I became fully persuaded that the number of the finally saved would equal, if not exceed, the number of the lost. And I was so forcibly impressed with this new and very joyful discovery, that I not only conversed in that strain privately, but boldly preached it in the congregation, which generally consisted of nearly a thousand persons upon Sundays. Some of the people to whom I had mentioned something respecting the sentiment thought that I was going at once to declare myself in favor of the *General Restoration;* but that was as yet far from being the case, though some of the arguments which I had glanced upon in that book, 'The Everlasting Gospel,' would frequently present themselves to my mind in such a forcible manner that I could scarcely withstand their evidence.

"In the month of September I left South Carolina on a visit to my friends in New England, intending, however, to return to my people again; but to prevent their being left destitute, I procured the Rev. Mr. Botsford to come and supply them, upon this condition, that whenever I should return he should resign the congregation to me again, if I required it. But he has remained the constant pastor ever since. I then travelled slowly through the continent, preaching to the people and conversing with my friends, to whom sometimes in private I proposed some of the arguments in favor of the *General Restoration* which I had read in 'The Everlasting Gospel,' on purpose to see what answers they could give; and this I did especially to able ministers, but, to my surprise, often found them quite at a stand, not knowing what to say. And some were almost overpowered with even the

weak manner in which I was capable of holding forth the arguments in favor of the Restoration. And oftentimes the answers that some of the greatest men gave were such as tended to increase my doubts respecting *endless misery*, rather than to remove them. I remember once, that I asked the Rev. Mr. Manning, president of Rhode Island College, and who was at that time one of my dearest friends, what was the strongest argument that he could use in favor of the doctrine of *endless misery*. He answered, that it was the nature of God to lay the greatest possible restraint upon sin, and therefore he had threatened it with *endless punishment*, as the highest restraint he could possibly lay upon it. This argument is answered in the third dialogue. Thus, after much seeking, I could find no satisfaction in the matter; but still my doubts increased. Notwithstanding I withstood the doctrine of the *Restoration* with all my might, and sometimes preached publicly against it with all the force I could muster, yet there was something in its favor that gained gradually upon my mind, and sometimes brought me to be willing to embrace it. I plainly saw that it would reconcile almost, if not quite, all difficulties of other systems; and I thought if I should ever receive it, I should be able to preach much easier and more freely than ever, and with far greater satisfaction; which, by experience, I have since found to be true. The ideas were sometimes so transporting to me, even while I professed to oppose the sentiment, that I have been constrained to set them forth in the most sublime manner that I was able; and sometimes so as actually to bring those who heard me converse on the subject to believe and rejoice in the *Universal Restoration*, while I thought myself an opposer of it, and only proposed the arguments in its favor to see what effect they would have on such who never heard them before. And I was often carried away, even while I intended only to let my friends hear

what might be said. I remember once, while I was at my father's table, in the year 1780, that I mentioned the doctrine of the *Restoration*, and finding that none of the company had even so much as heard of such a scheme, I began to hold it forth, produced many arguments in its favor, brought up many objections, answered them in such a manner as astonished all present; and I was amazed at myself, I spoke with so much ease and readiness as I hardly ever experienced before on any occasion. Nay, I was so much animated with the subject, that I said that I did not doubt but that in sixty years' time, that very doctrine would universally be preached and generally embraced in that very country, and would certainly prevail over all opposition.

"This discourse made a greater impression upon the minds of those who heard it, and upon my own also, than I intended; and though I afterwards used the best arguments I could in favor of the common opinion, yet I found them insufficient wholly to remove the effects of what I had before said.

"After spending about twelve months in the most delightful manner, constantly journeying and preaching with great success to vast multitudes of people in my native country, I set off with the intention to return towards South Carolina. On the way I tarried some time at the Rev. Mr. Samuel Waldo's, in Pawling's Precinct, State of New York, whose kind and friendly behavior towards me I remember with pleasure and mention with gratitude. I had a great deal of very agreeable conversation with him upon the matter, and he did not seem to oppose the ideas hardly at all, but only gently cautioned me against receiving anything erroneous. He is a man of most excellent spirit, and his family was, upon the whole, the most delightful, agreeable, and happy family that I ever knew. While I was at his house one of his children, then about twenty years of age, seemed fully

convinced of the truth of the doctrine by listening to our conversation, and was filled with great joy at the idea. Several religious men, who were on a journey, lodged at the house while I was there, got a hint of the matter, and wished to hear all that I could say in defence of it. I accordingly gave them some of the principal arguments in its favor, and obviated some of the most capital objections that could be brought against it; and I afterwards overheard them wishing that they had not been so curious as to have inquired so far into the subject, for they could not resist the arguments, although they seemed resolved to treat the sentiments as an error.

"In this state of mind, half a convert to the doctrine of the *Restoration*, I arrived in the city of Philadelphia, on the 7th of October, 1780. I intended to have left the city in a few days, and to have gone on towards South Carolina, but the Baptist church being destitute of a minister, they invited me to stop and preach with them, to which I was at length persuaded, and for some time I was much followed, and there were great additions to the church. The congregations increased in such a manner, especially on Sunday evenings, that our place of worship, though large, would by no means contain them. At length leave was asked for me to preach in the Church of St. Paul, in that city, which was granted. This was one of the largest houses of worship in Philadelphia, and equal in bigness to most of the churches in London. I think I preached there about eighteen sermons, and generally to very crowded audiences, frequently more than could possibly get into the house. Most of the clergy of every denomination in the city heard me there, and many thousands of different people. I am inclined to think that I never preached to so many before nor since as I did sometimes in that house, and with almost universal approbation. But now the time of my trouble and casting down came on, and thus it was.

"Soon after I arrived in that city I had inquired of some friends for 'The Everlasting Gospel,' which I could not light on for some time, but they lent me Mr. Stonehouse's book upon the 'Restitution of all Things,'[1] which I had never seen nor heard of before. This very learned work I read with great care, and his reasoning, arguments, and Scripture proof seemed to me entirely satisfactory.

"The friends who procured me the works of Mr. Stonehouse were concerned at my having an inclination to read anything upon the subject; nevertheless, though there were several of them with whom I conversed pretty freely upon the matter, and who knew of my reading Mr. Stonehouse's works, yet they behaved in so friendly a manner towards me that they never mentioned a word of it to any, until by other means it came to be known and talked of.

"In the house where I lodged when I first came to the city, I had, in the freedom of conversation, and with some appearance of joy, expressed myself in general terms upon the subject, but always in the exact words of Scripture, or in such a manner as this, namely, that I could not help hoping that God would finally bring *every knee to bow and every tongue to swear;* and that *at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess* JESUS CHRIST to be *Lord, to*

[1] "Sir George Stonehouse was born in Darnford, England, and was educated at Oxford. He belonged to a society at Oxford called the *Holy Club,* of which John Wesley was president. Whitfield, Charles Wesley, and James Hervey were also members. In this club the Restoration was frequently debated. Stonehouse took the affirmative of the question. He was eminently proficient in the Syriac language, of which he wrote a grammar. He supposes our Saviour delivered his discourses in that language. His first and largest work, entitled 'Universal Restitution a Scripture Doctrine,' was published in 1761. He also wrote several other works in defence of this sentiment."

the glory of God the Father. And that I hoped *that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in* CHRIST, *both which are in heaven, and which are on earth,* etc.

"Such passages as these I mentioned in this manner, hoping that they would be fulfilled. The people of the house seemed surprised, and asked me if I believed so. I answered, 'that sometimes I could not help hoping that might be so.' I could hardly have imagined among friends that any danger could have arisen from my expressing a hope that the Scriptures were true.

"However, these false friends told a minister, whom for a number of years I had esteemed as my best and most intimate friend, that I was turned heretic, and believed in the doctrine of the *Universal Restoration,* and desired him to convince me. Some time after, he met with me in the street, and in a very abrupt manner told me that he had wanted to see me for some time, that he might give me a piece of his mind; that he had been informed by such a person that I was inclined to the doctrine of the *Universal Restoration,* and then, instead of using any argument to convince me, or taking any method for my recovery, added this laconic speech, 'If you embrace this sentiment, I shall no longer own you for a brother.' And he has hitherto been as good as his word, having never written nor spoken to me from that day to this; and when I have since offered to shake hands with him he refused; and yet he was one whom I esteemed above any other on earth, as a hearty, sincere, long-tried, and faithful friend. If my intimate friend treated me in such a manner, what had I to expect from my open and avowed enemies?

"I now foresaw the storm, and I determined to prepare for it, not by denying what I had said, but by examining and determining for myself whether the sentiment was according to Scripture or not. If I found that

it was not, I was determined to retract; but if it was, to hold it fast, let the consequences be what they might. I had now no time to lose. I expected in a short time to be called to an account and examined respecting this doctrine, and obliged either to *defend or deny it.* I was already too well persuaded that it was true, to do the latter without hesitation, and yet not sufficiently for the former. For this purpose I shut myself up chiefly in my chamber, read the Scriptures, and prayed to God to lead me into all truth, and not suffer me to embrace any error; and I think that with an upright mind I laid myself open to believe whatever the Lord had revealed. It would be too long to tell all the teachings I had on this head; let it suffice, in short, to say that I became so well persuaded of the truth of the *Universal Restoration,* that I was determined never to deny it, let it cost ever so much, though all my numerous friends should forsake me, as I expected they would, and though I should be driven from men, and obliged to dwell in caves or dens of the earth, and feed on wild roots and vegetables, and suffer the loss of all things, — friends, wealth, fame, health, character, and even life itself. The truth appeared to me more valuable than all things, and as I had found it, I was determined never to part with it, let what would be offered in exchange.

"I had now formed my resolution, and was determined how to act when the trial came. Hitherto I said nothing about the *Restoration* in public, and little in private; but I preached up the death of Christ, and salvation for man through him, without restriction. This free manner of preaching gave offence to some, who came to hear me no more. On the evening of the 22d of January, 1781, a number of the members of the church, who had heard that I held the doctrine of the *Restoration,* met me at a friend's house, to ask me the question whether I did or not. I acknowledged that I did, but did not

wish to trouble anybody with my sentiments. They desired me neither to preach them in public nor to converse of them in private. I told them that if they would prevent people from asking me, I would say nothing about the matter; but if people asked me concerning my sentiments, I could not deny them, and if they wished to know the reasons, I must inform them. And thus the matter was to rest; but some that were present wished to know the foundation of my sentiments, others opposed it, not wishing to hear anything in its favor. At length, it was agreed that I might read the passages of the Scripture upon which I judged the doctrine of the *Restoration* to be founded, but must not add a single word of explanation on my part, and, on their parts, they were not to ask any questions or make the least opposition, for if they did, I insisted upon the liberty of defending.

"Accordingly, I took the Bible, and read many passages in the Old and New Testaments, which I judged to contain the doctrine; and the very reading of them convinced several of the company of the truth of the Restoration. There was nothing farther took place at that time. We parted with mutual agreement, — I was not to preach it in the pulpit, nor to introduce it in conversation, but I would not be obliged to deny it, when asked, nor refuse to vindicate it, if opposed; and, on their parts, they were not to speak of it to my prejudice, but to endeavor, as much as possible, to keep the matter close. And so we parted. But, notwithstanding all the pains that could be taken, the matter got abroad, and several came to discourse with me on my principles, to whom I gave such reasons, as I was able, for what I believed. A little time after this, I met with another copy of 'The Everlasting Gospel,' which I then read through with attention for the first time, and found much satisfaction; the arguments and Scripture proofs therein contained seemed to me suffiient to convince all that would read with candor and attention.

"I still continued to act only on the defensive, not preaching upon the subject, nor going about to private houses to make interest in my favor, but if any came to me and wished me to discourse upon it, I would not refuse; and thus a number were convinced of its truth, while others violently opposed it. And thus matters continued until the latter end of March. Having heard that the German Baptists in Germantown, about eight miles from Philadelphia, held the doctrine of the *Restoration*, I had appointed to spend the first Sunday in April with them; and this engagement had been made some time. Just as I was ready to go out of the city, on Saturday, I found that some of the members of the Church had privately sent into the country and collected a number of the ablest ministers, who were arrived in the city on purpose to debate. I gave them the liberty of my pulpit as they pleased for the next day, and went out of the city to go to Germantown; and then took that opportunity to go and visit that ancient, venerable, and excellent man, Dr. George De Benneville, who received me in the most kind, open, and friendly manner, and his conversation was most highly edifying to me. Afterwards I went to Germantown, and lodged there all night, ready to preach the next day. As soon as my enemies in Philadelphia found that I was gone out of the city, they spread a report that I had fled to avoid an interview with these ministers who had come on purpose to convince me. Nothing could have been more false than such a report, for I had been engaged to go to Germantown, on that day, for several weeks beforehand. I knew nothing of these ministers being sent for until they came to town; and I had no fear but I should be able, by God's assistance, to defend the cause before them; and besides, I had appointed to return on Monday, and did return accordingly. The whole church met, both my friends and my opposers, and these ministers met with them. I was called

to attend a funeral at that time, and was at the house of mourning, when a messenger was sent in haste to desire my immediate attendance at the meeting, without any delay. I found that those who were my enemies in the assembly had been greatly vaunting over my friends, because I was not present. They said I had absconded merely to avoid a debate, in which I was sure to be confuted, as here was an opportunity that might never present itself again; and seven wise, able, and learned ministers had assembled on purpose to dispute with me, but that I had gone, and left my adherents in the lurch, from a consciousness that I was not able to defend my cause; with abundance more to the same purpose. My friends, on the other hand, told them that I was afraid of nothing but sin, and that they doubted not of my being able and willing to dispute with any one of the gentlemen, or all of them, one by one, if they chose it. Oh, no, they replied, they knew better than that; I was gone out of the way on purpose, where I could not be found. My friends told them that if there was a vote passed in the assembly that I should dispute with any one, they would engage that I would be among them in a few minutes. It was accordingly unanimously voted that I should dispute with the Rev. Mr. Boggs, upon my sentiments, in the presence of these ministers and of the whole assembly. But when in a few minutes I came in and took my place, what different countenances appeared in the congregation! All my friends were highly pleased, and the others were as much confounded and disappointed at seeing me come in so cheerfully and quickly, after they made themselves so sure that I would not come. But surely, I might have been looked upon with pity. Alone to answer for myself, no one to support me; while my antagonists were seven of the ablest ministers that could be obtained.

"I felt, however, that inward composure — from a con-

sciousness of having acted uprightly and sincerely in the whole affair — that even caused my countenance to appear easy and cheerful.

"The vote was then publicly read, and I stood up and declared my readiness to comply with what was required. The worthy gentleman who was chosen to dispute with me then rose up, and said these words, 'I am not prepared to dispute with Mr. Winchester. I have heard that he says that it would take six weeks to canvass all the arguments fairly on both sides, and I suppose he has been studying upon the subject for a week or more, and I have not studied it at all; and therefore I must beg to be excused.'

"When I found that he, and all the rest, wholly declined disputing with me, I begged liberty to speak for two hours upon my sentiments, and lay them fairly open, and the ground upon which I maintained them. But this was denied me. I then desired them to give me one hour for this purpose; but this was also refused. One of the ministers got up and said that their business was not to debate with me, but to ask me whether I believed the *Restoration* of bad men and angels, finally, to a state of holiness and happiness, etc.

"But if they did not come to dispute with me, why was the vote passed by their party, as well as by my friends, that I should dispute with them? This speaks for itself. The ministers insisted upon putting the question to me, 'Do you believe the doctrine of the *Universal Restoration?*' My friends objected to my answering the question, unless I might be allowed to vindicate my sentiments. But I said that I did not fear any use that could be made of my words; that I had always freely confessed what my thoughts were when asked; and, therefore, told them that I did heartily believe the *General Restoration,* and was willing to defend it. The gentleman that was chosen to dispute with me then asked me whether I thought it

strange, considering my change of sentiments, that there should be such a noise and uproar made upon the occasion, etc. I told him that I did not think it strange at all, and gave him a little history of the affair, and how the matter came abroad, through the treachery of some whom I had esteemed as my friends; that when I mentioned it to them I was not fully persuaded of it myself, and perhaps never might have been, if I had not been opposed and threatened; that I never had intended to trouble the people with my sentiments, but was willing to live and die with them, if they could bear with me; but that I could not use so much deceit as to deny what I believed, when asked by any one; that I never had yet done so, and by the grace of God never would, let the consequences be what they might. What I said was in the presence of all my accusers, and none of them could contradict me, nor had aught to lay to my charge, except in this matter of the gospel of my Saviour. My discourse took such an effect upon him, that he then publicly declared that my behavior in the whole affair had been as became a man and a Christian, and that no one could accuse me of any improper conduct. I stood some time, and as none appeared to have anything farther to say to me, I took my leave and went out. He accompanied me to the door, and told me that he would write me upon the subject; but whatever was the reason, he never did, nor have we spoken together since.

"The ministers then advised the people to get another minister; but my friends, being numerous, insisted it should be fairly determined by the subscribers at large; but this the other party would not agree to. Several very fair offers were made by my friends to them, but they refused them all; and finally, by force, they kept us out of the house, and deprived us of our part of the property, which was at last confirmed to them by law, though I think unjustly, as we were the majority at first;

but they took uncommon pains in carrying about a *protest* against me to every member of the church, both in the city and in the country, and threatening all with excommunication who would not sign it; by which some were intimidated, and by these and other means they strengthened their party. But, on the other hand, I took no pains either to proselyte people to believe my sentiments or to make my party strong. But I believe near an hundred of the members suffered themselves to be excommunicated, rather than sign the protest against me and the doctrine which I preached. When we were deprived of our house of worship, the *trustees* of the *university* gave us the liberty of their hall, where we worshipped God for about four years, until we purchased a place for ourselves. But to return. After this meeting of the ministers, the whole affair was open, and I found myself obliged to vindicate the doctrine which they had condemned unheard, not only in private but in the pulpit. Accordingly, on the 22d day of April, I preached a sermon on Gen. iii. 15, in which I openly asserted the doctrine of the *final and Universal Restoration* of all fallen intelligences. This was published by particular desire, with a list of the plainest Scripture passages in favor of the doctrine, and a number of the most common and principal objections fairly stated and answered. This was my first appearance in the world as a *prose* writer, which was what I never expected to be, and probably should never have been but for this occasion; still less a writer of controversy, to which I had naturally a great aversion.[1]

[1] The title of the sermon is: "The Seed of the Woman bruising the Serpent's Head. A Discourse delivered at the Baptist Meeting-House." He concludes it by saying that the doctrine of Universal Restoration "is built upon the following propositions, which must be proved to be false before it can be overthrown:

"I. God is love, essentially and communicatively, and loves all the

"After I had preached this sermon I had the Chevalier Ramsay's 'Philosophical Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion'[1] put into my hands. I read the same with great pleasure and advantage, and I must acknowledge it to be a work of great merit, and I have reason to bless God that ever I had an opportunity of reading it. I can heartily recommend it as one of the best works in our language, and I must say that in most things I fully agree with that very intelligent author. On the fourth day of January, 1782, I preached the sermon called 'The Outcasts Comforted,' from Isaiah lxvi. 5, to my friends who had been cast out and excommunicated for believing this glorious doctrine. This was soon after printed, and the next year it was republished in London by the

beings he hath made, considered as his creatures, and is constantly seeking to do them good.

"II. God's design in creating intelligent beings was to make them happy in the knowledge and love of his glorious perfections.

"III. God's absolute, ultimate designs cannot be eternally frustrated.

"IV. Christ died for all; and died not in vain.

"V. Christ came to destroy the evil principle, or sin, out of the universe, which he will finally effect; and then misery shall be no more.

"Here are the merits of the cause: these propositions are some of them self-evident, and the others admit of the fullest demonstration, or Scripture proof; and till these, the foundation principles, are overthrown, all attempts against the doctrine are in vain.

"Glory to God in the highest. We believe the time will come when Christ 'shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied;' when 'the serpent's head shall be bruised;' 'all things put under the feet of the Mediator;' and, finally, the kingdom delivered up to the Father, 'that God may be ALL IN ALL;' 'for of HIM, and through HIM, and to HIM are ALL THINGS, to whom be GLORY forever. AMEN.'"

[1] Andrew Michael Ramsay was a native of Ayr, Scotland, where he was born June 9, 1686. He was educated at Edinburgh, and was intimate with Archbishop Fénelon, who cherished towards him the warmest friendship. He died at the age of fifty-seven. Besides the work mentioned above, he advocated the doctrine of Universal Restoration in "The Travels of Cyrus."

Rev. Mr. Richard Clarke, and was the first of my works ever printed here.

"I have thus given a brief, plain, and simple account of the means that have brought me to think and write in the manner that I have done, and which account may be considered as an historical sketch of nearly four years of my life." [1]

A statement of the facts from the Baptist standpoint was given in the "History of the Philadelphia Baptist Association," published, in 1832, in a weekly journal entitled "The World." It does not materially differ from Mr. Winchester's account. "The majority" — Mr. Winchester's friends, says the writer of the history, Rev. Mr. Jones, — "proposed to have the property valued, and either party take it at its value. And," adds Mr. Jones, "I cannot but commend the *justice and magnanimity* of the majority. They were in possession of the property, much of which belonged to them; nor had it in their power to do much for the weal of Zion, yet they had some conscience." Why this proposition was not accepted, is not explained.

About the time these difficulties commenced in Philadelphia, Rev. Samuel Stillman, D. D., an eminent Baptist minister, then settled in Boston, Mass., and whose pulpit Mr. Winchester had occupied during the summer of 1776, wrote to Mr. Winchester, warning him against the doctrine of Restoration and desiring to restrain him from the belief of it. The letter is not preserved, but Mr. Winchester's answer was the following:

[1] Preface to the second edition of "The Universal Restoration," exhibited in four dialogues between a minister and his friend, etc. By Elhanan Winchester. London, 1792. pp. iii–xxvi.

"PHILADELPHIA, March 11, 1781.

"SIR, — Waiving all subjects of an inferior nature, I think it incumbent on me to canvass that which is of the greatest weight and highest import, and I earnestly pray the Father of Lights to illuminate both the writer and the reader, that the plain simple truths of the everlasting Gospel may come home to the heart with all that force, power, and conviction upon the mind, which they were graciously designed to impress.

"In order to be explicit and intelligible, I shall endeavor to answer my friend's letter in *general*, and then sum up my sentiments in as brief a manner as possible, which will contain an answer to each *particular*.

"You say I informed you my ministry was blessed, and you hoped to hear of some good effects from it. Blessed be God, it not only was, but continues to be, blessed; and if you do not give too willing an ear to stories which have their rise in envy and malevolence, if you do not suffer yourself to be imposed upon by external appearances, if you attend more to the reports of Christian experience than the florid eloquence of its nominal professors, your hope will not be in vain, nor your expectations frustrated; but you will hear your friend Winchester — zealous for God's glory and the good of his creatures — has been the happy instrument of bringing many souls to the knowledge of God; and even now they flock to truth as doves to their windows.

"You tell me with a friendly concern, of which I am not insensible, that you hear I avowedly profess Murray's principles. From what I read in the close of my friend's letter, I should be sorry to be in the most remote sense tinctured with principles so full of levity, so full of absurdity, so gross, as the idea of the sheep and the goats convey; so divested of all seriousness and solidity that Christianity must start with horror, and morality blush with conscious shame at the bare recital.

"My friend ought first to be truly and fully assured that I am bewitched, otherwise the question is unanswerable; he ought to be perfectly convinced that I held Murray's principles, or errors, or the charge is uncharitable.

"As to what my friend advances concerning Mr. Whitfield's sermon, and the opinion of the learned Drs. Doddridge and Gill, I shall forbear to comment; and only observe that there is a *Bishop* whose expressions and sentiments I give the greatest preference to, and whose simple *ipse dixit* I hold in higher esteem than the whole collective body of divines.

"I mean *the Bishop of Souls*, the Head of the true Christian Church, Christ Jesus, the best interpreter of his own doctrine by his holy spirit, with which he endows his ministers, servants, children, and people, that they may not rest their faith upon opinions, or sentiments, or learning and science, all which serve to entangle and perplex the mind with nice speculations, and which engender strife; but upon the more sure word of prophecy.

"Whatever is to be known of God is made manifest by the work of this spirit. Its office is to guide unto all truth. It is this spirit that bears away with our spirits, what we are, how we stand, to whom we are to be accountable, and what the consequences of obedience and disobedience are. It is this spirit, this illumination, this divine light, which alone can and will, if properly attended to, enable my worthy friend to see into the following brief explanation of my sentiments respecting the glorious Gospel of *Jesus Christ* our Lord.

"God, in his written word, declares himself as the everlasting, essential love. 'He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love.' If God be love, emphatically so, abstractly so, he can be nothing else; then it necessarily follows, whatever he inflicts upon his crea-

tures, must have its rise and spring in love, and in wisdom, however severe and terrible it may appear to a short-sighted creature; and if in love, it must finally centre in their happiness, and nothing can be truly termed so, that comes short of that undescribable felicity enjoyed in that silent Eternity of Eternities which angels, the elect, the first-born, the spirits of the just departed, kings, — but not without subjects, — governors, or rulers of five cities, of ten cities, — but not bare walls, — and all, all who have followed their Lord in the regeneration, together with all the subordinate millions, stars in their several magnitudes, each in their several classes, ranks, and orders, shall enjoy, when Christ, without diminution of his own glory, shall have delivered up — blessed truth — all into his Father's hands, and God be all in all.

"If God be love in the abstract, he can have neither hate, resentment, or revenge, as men count hate, resentment, and revenge, and therefore all his dispensations must tend to the one grand gracious design, — the restoration of all his creatures into that state out of which they have been deluded by the adversary.

"If God be love, he must in an especial manner love that which proceedeth from him. Acts xvii. 28: For in him we live, move, and have our being; for we also are his offspring, a part of the divine nature, however defaced by sin, and therefore must return to Him who gave it. After having been fire-purged, — after the gross matter being consumed, the dross separated from the gold, or, in other words, the polluted creature by part being consumed, — it may be qualified to stand before Him who is all holy, all pure; and in this sense God is justly styled a consuming fire.

"I find it plainly and expressly declared in Rom. xi. 36, that of him, through him, and to him, are all (without exception), all things, — in Col. i. 16, more expressly declared: 'By him were all things [no exceptions] cre-

ated, that are in heaven, or in earth, visible and invisible [mark here what exactness and precision]. Whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him and for him.'

"Read the subsequent verses attentively, my friend.

"I read in Wisdom xi. 24 that 'God loveth all things that are, and hateth nothing which he hath made; and that he would not have made anything if he had hated it.' In Rev. iv. 11, I read, — nay, I feel my soul tuned to the universe acclaim, and it echoes responsive to, — 'Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they were created.'

"Once more. Paul, by the spirit, not as a sentimentalist, and I feel unity with it, 'Love thinketh no evil, much less does or designs evil,' 1 Cor. xiii. 5; from all which I draw this blessed, this happy, this apt, this easy conclusion.

"If all things, visible and invisible, were created by him, and for his pleasure, he is not a God whose pleasure consists in the never-ceasing torments of the creatures he has made. He is not less love, who is love, than the creature he has formed, who, only feeling a spark of divine love, wishes for arms wide as space to embrace all God's creatures, for wings swifter than eagle's, to convey them to the feet of Jesus. O my friend, is the river larger than the ocean, into which it disembogues itself; the drop larger than the bucket; the inferior luminaries brighter than the sun, from which they borrow their lustre? Is he a God, whose glory is derived from the never-ending torments, shrieks, and groans of the creatures for whom he manifests as well as professes so much love, though as many as he loves he rebukes and chastens?

"The Lord by his prophet Isaiah (xlvi. 23) says, 'I have sworn by myself, the word has gone out of my

mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear.' If so, Lord, we must believe that none of thy creatures will be excluded from thy presence long, as thou art God. If exiled, how shall they bow the knee to thee in token of submission; if excluded, how shall they swear allegiance to thee as King of kings and Lord of lords, seeing this naturally supposes another power, to which they will be subject? And this, thy Son's merits and atonement, are made not sufficient for all, but for a very few; instead of being a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, they are inefficacious to three parts in four of mankind.

"What, then, shall we say to John, who, in his first Epistle (ii. 2) assures us, 'He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.' Or to Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans (v. 18), where he as confidently and plainly asserts that 'As by the offence of one man judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so [exactly] by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life;' from all of which I draw this comforting inference, that no punishment, however grievous in its execution, however long in its duration, which unbounded love inflicts upon its creatures here or hereafter, is inflicted merely for the never-ending torments of those divine creatures who have had their origin in, by, and through Him, who is love unchangeable.

"Now, my friend, from this antepast on earth, let us, on the wings of contemplation, soar into the world of spirits, and with the eye of faith view the wonders there, as described in Rev. xiv. 1–4: 'I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on Mount Sion, and with him a hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. . . . And they sung as it were a new song, and no man could learn that song but the hundred and

forty and four thousand. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb.' Behold, the awful sealing of these servants the elect of God. But who are those that John tells us of in the 9th verse, 'After this I beheld, and lo,' etc. ? Who are these ? The question is answered in the 14th verse. These are they which have come out of great tribulation; and who these are, we shall perhaps see. 'And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying,—Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.' (Rev. v. 13.) Blessing! How, my friend, shall they cry 'blessing' for excruciating, never-ending torment ? Blessing to Him from whom they are forever excluded ? Honor! Shall they cry 'honor' for reducing them to a state worse than diabolical ? Glory! Shall they cry 'glory' for casting them into a state of everlasting torments ? Power! Shall they thank a power that is at this strange rate insufficient to release them out of the hands of devils ? Oh, what a rending is here of the glorious system of the Gospel! While one side acknowledges God has the power but not the will, the other subscribes to his having the will but not the power to be gracious, though both are stamped by the seal of Scripture. That which has neither beginning nor end is allowed by all to be the property peculiar only to the divine uncreated being; such an infinite duration, which, though it hath a beginning, yet has no end, can be the property only in his divine creatures, his offspring rooted in God, and must therefore in him be without end. Whatsoever has not its eternal root in God, or his creating power, but is sprung up in the creature, — such as sin, death, etc., — cannot have an absolutely endless existence. No, here God is the

consuming fire, to purify, to restore to primitive purity. If, then, degeneracy, or sin, which is found in fallen angels and man, together with the punishment following, are of an absolutely endless existence, and will continue long as God be God, then sin is either a God or a divine creature. And would my friend maintain such tenets when, in Wisdom i. 13, 'God made not death, neither hath he pleasure in the destruction of the living.' Attend, seriously attend, to what proceeds from the lip of truth in Rev. xxi. 4, 5: 'And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.' Glory to God, this is the Gospel, the blessed, glorious Gospel. This is good news indeed to all, — peace to all, good-will towards all, *salvation to all.* Then may the Conqueror of Death say, gloriously triumphant, 'O death, where is thy sting?' — lost, taken away; 'O grave, where is thy victory?' — not a soul to boast of, no, not one; all redeemed, all snatched from the spoiler, all answering the purpose of their creation, — the glory of God. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

"Was I to write all that is in my heart on this animating subject, it would swell a letter to volumes; I shall therefore come towards a conclusion with two observations. Respecting the words 'forever' and 'eternity:' 1st. They have several meanings, both in the Hebrew and in the Greek, and in the Scripture in many places signify no more than periods of time; and therefore what is said of a thing must be understood in such a manner as the nature of the thing will allow, whether of God or of creatures. 2d. When of God, an absolute, endless eternity (see Gen. xxi. 33; Chron. v. 13, etc.); when of the divine creatures, as in the letter above (see Matt. xxv. 46; Mark x. 30, etc.); when of things which have a certain period

of time, — a beginning and end, a man's lifetime (Lev. xxv. 30). 3d. The Levitical priesthood and the divine worship of the Old Testament (Heb. ix. 10; Exod. xii. 14, 17, and the following chapter). 4th. The time of Christ's incarnation, and before the preaching of the apostles (Rom. xvi. 25; Heb. ix. 26). 5th. In a complex sense, the age of this present world (Heb. xi. 3, compared with Eph. i. 20, 27). 6th. In particular this present wicked world to come to an end (Matt. xii. 32; xiii. 40; Luke xx. 34; Gal. i. 4; Eph. i. 21; 1 Tim. vi. 17); in all which places the word (*aion*) 'ages,' or 'eternity,' in Greek, is rendered by the word *world*. The next observation I shall attempt is, that if my friend will reperuse Dr. Gill, he will find that he acknowledges that some particular parts of Scripture must resolve into this doctrine, or they are unintelligible."

It is evident from the foregoing that Mr. Winchester had little or no sympathy with the theory advocated by John Murray. Before the two men met they knew little of, and were quite distant in their feelings towards, each other. Afterwards, as we shall see, they regarded each other with mutual respect and affection.

Mr. Winchester's religious views differed but little from Arminian orthodoxy, except in regard to the design and duration of punishment, and the ultimate salvation of all moral creatures, whether men or angels. The late Rev. Dr. Ballou, in an article already quoted from, in the "Universalist Quarterly" for January, 1848, thus describes Mr. Winchester's theology: —

"He found in the Scriptures explicit recognitions of a period when all things should be gathered together in Christ; when all things should be reconciled to God through him; when all things should be subdued to him,

and God become all in all; when every knee should bow, and every tongue confess, etc. Besides these, there were in all parts of the Bible many evident references to such a final consummation. The very plan of salvation, as revealed in the Scriptures, also involved Universalism; for God would have all men to be saved, and for that purpose sent his Son, who gave himself a ransom for all, — a purpose that could never be abandoned. And then, again, he saw the same result secured by the perfections of God; the divine nature could not fail to triumph eventually over all evil, and remove it from the universe; almighty power, omniscience, and infinite love could issue only in the sanctification and blessedness of all intelligent creatures. The objections urged from the Scripture language — 'everlasting fire, punishment,' etc.; 'forever, forever and ever,' etc. — he answered, by showing the ambiguous use of these epithets and qualifying phrases, and by lexicographical criticisms on the force of the original terms. Other texts adduced as objections he explained by their contents, or by parallel passages, according to the commonly received principles of interpretation. In doing this, he usually argued with good sense, and always with perfect candor; a cavil, or a sleight-of-hand treatment of a text would have been an impossibility with his open-hearted sincerity and serious temper. Though, like most of the cotemporary divines, and even biblical scholars, he relied too much on the mere verbal relations of particular texts, and therefore did not give free scope to the general purport of the discourse, and though he sometimes ran into downright enthusiasm, in accepting as literal the gorgeous imagery of the prophecies and apocalyptic visions, yet, so far as we know, he was the first to introduce among the Universalists anything that can be called Scripture interpretation. The fundamental principles of his method, somewhat enlarged indeed, and modified by the general

improvements of half a century, as well as by our own revisions, are those on which we now explain the Bible, or any other book.

"His peculiar views of the intermediate state and of futurity (*eschatology*), were the following: Immediately after his crucifixion, the soul of Christ went first to Paradise (Luke xxiii. 43), and there announced to the waiting expectant saints of all former ages salvation through his blood just shed. Then he descended to hell, in the lower parts of the earth, and there 'preached to the spirits in prison' (1 Pet. iii. 4), some of whom were thus converted. At his ascension, the souls both of the ancient believers in Paradise and of the recent believers in Gehenna, followed him in his triumphal progress into heaven (Ps. lxviii. 18; Eph. iv. 8), and were received with him into glory. Before the end of the world the bodies of all saints shall be raised, and they shall reign personally with Christ a thousand years on earth in all terrestrial as well as spiritual enjoyments. At the close of this period a general apostasy will follow the loosing of Satan; and, subsequently, the innumerable hosts of rebels will be destroyed in a most terrible manner, by fire from heaven. Then shall come the second resurrection and universal judgment (Rev. xx.). This will be held on our earth. The separation having been made, and the doom pronounced, the righteous shall follow Christ in his return to the highest heaven; while the wicked will be left behind for punishment (Matt. xxv.). The earth will then be melted, by the final conflagration, into a lake of fire, the horrible abode of lost men and angels, for ages of ages. Their unutterable sufferings, however, will at length bring them to submission; though some of the most perverse may continue obstinate, perhaps, till the fifty-thousandth year. But when the earth shall have been thoroughly purified by the flames, and all rebels, angelic as well as human, brought to repentance,

the new heavens and earth shall appear, and universal blessedness be complete. The Son shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father, and God be all in all."

In the published letters of Rev. John Murray there are frequent allusions to Mr. Winchester, and four letters which were directed to that gentleman; but, unfortunately, dates are omitted, and it is quite impossible to tell from these alone when either their correspondence or their personal acquaintance began. From unpublished letters to another Philadelphia friend, these dates may now be established. The first letter from Mr. Murray was written in the winter or spring of 1783. Under date of April 6, Mr. Murray says: —

"I am very sorry Mr. Winchester did not receive my letter, though if I should make up my judgment of him from what I have heard of him, from even his professing friends, as he has of me, I should be very indifferent whether he had received it or not; but as this is not the case, should I meet with a safe opportunity, I do not know but I may try once more, as I have a copy of what I wrote still by me."

This letter was written on account of a letter which his friend, Mr. B., had received from Mr. Winchester, in which mention was made of Mr. Murray. Concerning that portion of it, Mr. Murray says: —

"Of that part of your letter I know not what to think. I am ignorant what information you received from your correspondent, and indeed it is a light thing with me to be judged by man's judgment. One thing is certain, ignorance and prejudice have often laid that to my charge to which I am a stranger. However, if, as I

trust, you are a true disciple of Jesus Christ, you will judge no man before you hear him. I am ready at all times to give a reason for the hope that is in me, in meekness and fear. I confess I wish to have fellowship with those whose fellowship is with the Father, and with the Son Jesus Christ, and to accompany them without the camp, bearing the reproach of the Saviour; and this I am persuaded I shall some way or other do."

In August of that year Mr. Murray was in Philadelphia, and made Mr. Winchester's acquaintance, the latter being then in feeble health. Mr. Murray thus describes the interview: —

"I have been, by invitation, to visit Mr. Winchester; he seems tottering on the verge of another world. I have been edified by his remarks; and although I am not united with him in sentiment in every particular, yet we join issue in one glorious and fundamental truth, the final restoration of the whole posterity of Adam; and on this ground I hail him as my friend and brother. Our interview has been extremely affecting; he clasped me with ardor to his bosom, and dropped such tears as friends are wont to shed upon meeting each other after a long and painful separation. I anticipate both pleasure and profit from associating with this gentleman."

Again, in a letter to Rev. Noah Parker, he expresses his opinion of Mr. Winchester: —

"Since I last wrote to you I have seen and conversed with the Rev. Mr. Winchester. I admire him much; his conduct and expressions evince one of the best hearts I have known. I have conceived a very strong affection for him, and to the confusion of the enemies of God our Saviour, a very large number of respectable hearers have seen him and your friend enter the pulpit together. Mr.

Winchester sang, and addressed the throne of grace, and at his request I preached. A greater part of his congregation are enemies to me, because, in their judgment, I do not sufficiently expatiate upon inward holiness; for although they call themselves Universalists, yet Christ is not sufficient for them; but I have preached to their preacher in private, and I have the satisfaction to pronounce that he receives the grace of God with avidity." [1]

In an unpublished letter to a Philadelphia friend Mr. Murray writes: —

"Have you ever seen anything of Mr. Winchester since ——? God preserve that dear man. I long to see him, or hear from him at least. If I had time I would write to him. Give my heart's love to him. Tell him he would have made me very happy if he could have journeyed with me. This dear man will be my very warm friend or my very bitter enemy; God only knows which."

The personal relations of these two men were ever after of the most cordial character. They not unfrequently criticised each other's systems very freely, and sometimes with no little severity, but of each other they spoke with high commendation. In the fall of 1786 Mr. Murray heard that Mr. Winchester had spoken very plainly and severely of his views; and he writes: "I replied to all this, that I could not help loving Mr. Winchester, and that all this only serves to prove him at least an honest man."

Moses Winchester, a half-brother of Elhanan, began to preach in 1784, just as he was entering his twenty-

[1] Letters and Sketches of Sermons, vol. ii. p. 112.

first year. He accompanied his brother to New England in the fall of 1785, and officiated in the Universalist house of worship in Boston frequently during that visit. Speaking of the two, in a letter to a Philadelphia friend, Mr. Murray says: —

"I really think Mr. Winchester [Elhanan] is the best preacher I know in this country, if he preaches always as when I had the pleasure of hearing him. His brother Moses has, I think, clearer views of the Gospel preached unto Abraham; but I fear he never will be so great a man as his brother. I am afraid he is not so heartily engaged in the cause as I could wish he was."

Most of Moses Winchester's ministry was in New Jersey; but we have no particulars in regard to it. He died in 1793.

Elhanan Winchester, and his friends who were shut out of the Baptist meeting-house, continued to worship in the hall of the University, located on Fourth street, south of Arch, in Philadelphia, for about four years. In October, 1784, they made an effort to obtain subscriptions for erecting a house of worship. The form of subscription was forwarded to Mr. Murray for his criticism, and under date of Oct. 21, 1784, Mr. Murray encloses his answer in a letter to a friend, with a request that it be handed to Mr. Winchester, and that Mr. Murray's friends will, "according to their ability, lend him a helping hand." To Mr. Winchester he said: —

"I trust your endeavors to erect a convenient building for the worship of the true God will be crowned with success. Every genuine believer will acknowledge the *true God* to be the *only wise God and our Saviour*, the Saviour of all men.

"The quotation from the introduction with which you have favored me, corresponds exactly with my wishes; yet, as there have been so many instances of religious fraud practised upon similar occasions, I doubt not you will readily agree to any plans proposed by liberal minds, calculated to prevent anything of this kind which may arise from the zeal of Pharisaical leaven, fermenting in the minds of future bigots. You are well enough acquainted with the nature of man, even in his best estate, to know that privileges of this description cannot be too cautiously guarded. Would it not be well, therefore, — I avail myself of the privilege to which friendship entitles me, — would it not be well to submit your plan to the consideration of judicious individuals not immediately connected with you? Possibly some salutary regulations might be thus suggested. In the multitude of counsel there is *security;* and I am persuaded so generous a procedure would meet a just reward. Nay, such are my sentiments of you that I am confident, were you able to build a house yourself, you would wish to keep it like the heaven to which our gospel leads — perpetually open. If you proceed upon the liberal principles which you contemplate, my efforts to perfect your plan shall not be wanting. I have already addressed many of my friends upon the subject." [1]

The "introduction" above referred to Mr. Murray communicates to Noah Parker as being, —

"Which house shall be cheerfully opened, upon application to a committee to be chosen out of the congregation and church, to all denominations, and especially to those who teach the universal love of God, and the final restitution of all things."

The effort was not successful, and the project of

[1] Letters and Sketches, vol. ii. pp. 291, 292.

obtaining a house of worship in that manner was abandoned. The plan which finally succeeded is thus described by the late Rev. A. C. Thomas: —

"Nov. 24, 1785, Anthony Cuthbert, mast-maker, and Abraham Collins, sail-maker (they were brothers-in-law), in their own names, but for the behoof of the existing organization of Universalists, bought the Masons' Lodge for four thousand dollars,—one fourth cash and a bond and mortgage (Dec. 16, 1785) for the remainder; and Jan. 16, 1786, they united in a deed of trust in behalf of the 'Society of Universal Baptists,' with this preamble: 'Whereas, the Society of people called Baptists, known by the name of the First Baptist Church in Philadelphia, did, on or about the month of March, 1781, disunite from the fellowship of said Society divers of their members who held and professed, and for so holding and professing, the doctrine of the universal love of God, and the final restitution of all things through Jesus Christ our Lord: And whereas, the members of said Society so disunited, and divers other persons holding the same doctrine, have united together, and formed a religious Society called the Society of Universal Baptists,' etc. This deed of trust acknowledged that the payment of one thousand dollars had been derived from subscriptions for a church edifice. It reserved to Cuthbert and Collins the right to dispose of the property, if necessary, to indemnify them against the bond accompanying the mortgage of three thousand dollars, and vested the use of the premises in the Society of Universal Baptists, the trust being subject to the incumbrance referred to." [1]

At what time the Society of Universal Baptists was organized is not known. The property which was pur-

[1] A Century of Universalism, pp. 32, 33.

chased for them was a plain brick building, erected by the Free Masons in 1754, and situated on Lodge Alley, a narrow street running westward from Second street, north of Walnut. It was doubtless first used by the Universalists on Mr Winchester's return from his eastward visit in the early summer of 1786.

While they were still worshipping in the Hall of the University, Mr. Winchester prepared and published a hymn-book for their use. A few of the hymns were from his own pen, but the greater part were selected from various authors. At this time they continued to call themselves the Baptist Church, as the book is said to be "Designed for the edification of the pious of all denominations, but more particularly for the use of the Baptist Church in Philadelphia."

Of Elhanan Winchester, Morgan Edwards says (Baptists in New Jersey, 1792): "He is now in London, *preaching up the restoration of all lapsed intelligences*, and defending the doctrine from the pulpit and the press. He has published a volume of dialogues between a believer and opposer of the doctrine, wherein objections are stated and answered. He has also published lectures on prophecies not yet fulfilled. The four volumes are come to America. His expositions of these prophecies are curious, because literal. He is also publishing a monthly magazine, and has published abundance of sermons, hymns, etc. It is said of Joseph Scaliger, that he remembered all he read. Mr. Winchester's memory approaches towards his. Had this surprising man's industry been equal to his retention, he would now rank with the most knowing ones of the age; as it is, he has acquired knowledge of the learned

languages. He made himself very popular, in the preaching way, this side the Atlantic; which popularity reached England as early as 1781; for in the minutes of the Association held at Bristol that year are these words: 'Brother Winchester is now owned of God in a surprising manner. In three months he baptized two hundred and thirty-nine at Peedee, in South Carolina. A remarkable work is begun at Newtown, Brookline, etc., by means of Brother Winchester; and what makes it more astonishing is, that Brookline is the place of his nativity,' etc. He is now popular in Europe, and his originalities will make him popular everywhere" (pp. 139, 140).

Returning for a moment to the date of the Association at Oxford, we close this chapter with a brief mention of the preachers of Universalism known to have been in active service at that time. In addition to Messrs. De Benneville, Wright, Rich, Parker, and Adams Streeter, mentioned in a previous chapter, and Mr. Murray and the two Winchesters, there were the following: Clement Sumner, of Swanzey, N. H., of whom little is known except that he was a graduate of Yale College in 1758, and from that time till 1775 a Congregationalist preacher, when he became a Universalist. Little is known of his subsequent career, except that he preached as opportunity was given, and that he died in 1795.

Thomas Barns (we follow his own spelling), born in Merrimac, N. H., Oct. 4, 1749, became in early life a Baptist; but, under the preaching of Rev. Caleb Rich, embraced Universalism in 1782, and soon after began to preach. In 1785 he was living in Jaffrey, N. H.,

and preaching in that region. The following year he removed to New Fane, Vt. We shall have more to say of him hereafter. Three of his daughters distinguished themselves by their intelligent zeal for the spread of Universalism. Lucy, the oldest, published a series of "Serious and Important Questions answered from the Holy Scriptures," which passed through several editions. She died in 1809, at the early age of twenty-nine years. Soon after her death, several of her letters, essays, and poems were collected, and published in a pamphlet of seventy-one pages, entitled "The Female Christian." Extracts from it will be found in "Our Woman Workers," by E. R. Hanson, pages 12–14. Levisa was associated with the Rev. George Bates in compiling a memoir of her father. Sally, another daughter, was a woman of remarkable mental qualities, impressing every one with the clearness and power of her mind.[1]

Zephaniah Lathe, of Grafton, Mass., united with the Baptist church in that town, under the ministry of Elhanan Winchester, in 1772. He became a Universalist and began to preach early in 1785.

Noah Murray, born in Litchfield County, Conn., in 1745, served in the army during the Revolution, and at its close became a Baptist preacher in Lanesboro, Mass. In 1784 he became a Universalist, and at the time of the meeting of the Association was preaching in Berkshire County, Mass. The late Col. Joseph Kingsbury, of Sheshequin, Penn., who was intimate with Mr. Murray many years, says: —

"Noah Murray removed from Hinsdale, Berkshire Co., Mass., to Shawnee, Luzerne Co., Penn., in 1785. He

[1] See Our Woman Workers, pp. 11–24.

had commenced preaching the gospel before he came to this country. He preached occasionally at Shawnee, but I never heard that he formed a society of Universalists in that place. In the spring of the year 1787 he left Shawnee with his family, and came up the river as far as Queen Esther's Flats, and took possession of a small log cabin some one had erected and left. He farmed it upon these flats till 1790, when he removed to a lot on the flats nearly opposite the village of Athens, which lot or farm is now owned and occupied by one of his grandsons. Brother Murray was not idle in promoting a knowledge of the gospel in this quarter, preaching Sundays as often as an opportunity presented, and by social converse teaching 'the blind the way they should go.' He had a good-sized hewn-log schoolhouse to preach in at Sheshequin. At the Point (Athens), he preached at first in the largest house that could be procured."

David Evans, born in 1738, was a resident of New Britain, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, where he was for many years a deacon of the Baptist Church. At what time he became a Universalist is not known; but in November, 1785, he published a sermon on "General Election; or, Salvation for All Men illustrated and proved," which he had "preached at the Meeting of the United Brethren in New Britain." He was a man of more than ordinary abilities, and published several pamphlets in defence of Universalism as advocated by Relly and Murray. The sermon on "General Election" was read by Mr. Murray to his Gloucester audience Aug. 25, 1786, as appears from the following extract from a letter written by Mr. Murray the next day to a Philadelphia friend: —

"Yesterday my hearers had the pleasure of attending, in the afternoon, on Mr. David Evans's proving the Uni-

versality of Election. Thus, you see, I have preferred him to your poor servant. I intend to get it reprinted in Boston, and disperse them about as far as possible. How glad I should have been if this sermon had been the product of Elhanan's pen; but God will send by whom he will send. When you see my brother Evans, give my love to him."

A month later, writing from Boston to the same friend, Mr. Murray says: —

"Our friends here have, from the sermon we have seen, conceived a very high opinion of Mr. Evans, and would be exceeding glad to see him this way. Pray, is that gentleman fixed anywhere? Has he what they call pulpit talents? We have now our meeting-house in Boston very elegantly fitted up, and there is, when they have a preacher, a very large and very attentive congregation. If Mr. Evans is not already engaged, he would find an open door in this place, and a hearty welcome. They beg me to inform him that a visit, at least, would be very thankfully received. I write you, my friend, for this purpose, begging you would convey the request as soon as possible."

A month later he writes: —

"I am exceeding sorry to hear of Mr. Evans's inability to come."

In all, then, there were thirteen preachers of Universalism in America in 1785; but it is not to be supposed that they were all statedly employed; nor is it probable that in many cases they were aware of the existence and work of each other.

Rev. John Tyler, Rector of the Episcopal Church in Norwich, Ct., has already been mentioned as being in sympathy with Mr. Murray's views, and as having occa-

sionally preached for him in Gloucester, and elsewhere; but he gave no prominence to this doctrine in his regular ministry, nor did he care to attach his name to the work which he wrote in its illustration and defence.

There were two laymen, however, in Norwich, who publicly advocated Universalism. Daniel Hall, a very worthy and devout man attempted to preach, but soon relinquished the effort, as his success was not equal to his desires. Subsequently he became a preacher among the Congregationalists. Gamaliel Reynolds, "a mason by trade, but a man of strong, though uncultivated, mind," became a preacher among the Separatists about the year 1740. For "fifteen or twenty years" before his death, which occurred in 1805, he was a preacher of Universalism, but still attending to his secular business.[1] He seems to have been a Rellyan, but, in Mr. Murray's estimation, to have had a superficial and somewhat erroneous view of that theory. Among the unpublished letters of Mr. Murray is one addressed to Mr. Reynolds "Nov. 22, 1790." In it Mr. Murray says: —

"I have been informed that you have made some very capital mistakes in handling the Word of Life; that you have applied to our Saviour what the Holy Ghost applied to the Grand Adversary, — as in the case of the man who had not on the wedding garment, and the scape-goat, etc. Now, my very dear friend, as you can have no interest in propagating such very capital mistakes, I encourage hope that you will in future render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's. Let us, I entreat you, beware of making use of any figure

[1] For further particulars of his life and labors, see A Historical Sketch of Universalism in Norwich, Conn. By Rev. R. O. Williams.

to point out our Saviour that is not *consistent* with his *character*."

Mr. Reynolds had also, it would seem, pushed some of Mr. Relly's notions to decidedly Antinomian conclusions. Mr. Murray, after reminding him that he had been an instrument, in the hand of God, of bringing him to an acquaintance with some truth which he had not known before, desires to be considered by him as being in the way of duty in faithfully admonishing him against the influence of this pernicious error: —

"I have never heard you say much in public, and though your friends have told me of many very great mistakes you have made in handling the Word of Life, yet, whenever I have had the opportunity of speaking in your company, your cordial assent to everything I advanced, made me at a loss how to determine on what I heard. I have, therefore, only now to give you the word of counsel as a brother and a real friend, that you would make the Scriptures your rule by which you will determine to walk in your public, as I am persuaded you have ever done in your private, character. Let it be one part of your study to make your hearers sensible that they have, by transgression, forfeited their life; show them that the wages of sin is the death of the soul; show them that, in consequence of the Saviour's death, who gave himself a ransom for all, the gift of God is everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord, as on the belief of this truth depends our actual enjoyment, as, till this is believed in the heart, there can be neither peace nor joy as coming from the Spirit of God, and therefore of enduring nature. Endeavor, by every part of Divine Revelation that tends to illustrate this grand truth, to point it out. Then, having proved that your hearers are all bought with a price, make them, as far as you are

able, sensible that they are not their own; that they belong to Him who paid so dear a price for their redemption; that if they belong to him, he is entitled to their service; and that in serving him, whose service, after all, is perfect freedom, there is great reward. If you find your hearers willing to hear the voice of our divine Master, you will find them, therefore, asking, 'What will my gracious Master have me to do?' You will then, if you yourself are under the influence of the Spirit of Truth, lead them to the fountain-head of divine information. You will point to the place, and say, 'Thus saith the Lord.' If there should be some whose lazy, indolent souls would strive to take shelter under a perversion of the truth, by affirming that Jesus Christ, having finished the work which was given him to do, left nothing for them to do, you will then inform them that, though he finished the work which was given *him* to do, as a *Saviour*, he did not finish the work that is given his *people to do*, as the *saved*. If they should deny this, you will then have recourse to the testimony of our blessed Master himself, and his Apostles. If they will not walk by this rule, from such you will turn away. Let me entreat you to endeavor to instil into the minds of all who hear you that the revelation which respects the conduct of the saved is as authentic as that which respects the conduct of the Saviour.

"But you will say, perhaps, How is this following the example of the Apostle, who determined to know nothing amongst the Corinthians but Christ, and him crucified? As a preacher of God's salvation, he never did. But in the fifteenth of this first epistle to this people, did he deviate from this rule? According to some, he did; but they are mistaken. He did not; he resolved to know nothing but Christ, and him crucified, as the matter of our salvation, of all men's salvation in the Saviour; but he aimed at making these same Corinthians sensible, in

the second verse of the fifteenth chapter, that, in order to be *saved* in *themselves,* they must *keep in memory* what he had *preached unto them.* The truth is, there is one salvation which was begun and completed by Christ, as crucified. This is the salvation that, in the word of the gospel, is preached unto all unbelievers, by the faithful servants of Christ Jesus; that hearing they may believe, and believing, consequent thereon, be made partakers of that salvation that the Apostle here speaks of, and which salvation you may lose by losing the remembrance of what was before preached. I wish you, then, my brother, to be a fellow-helper with me. Preach the word, and *clearly,* from a full conviction that no one will ever enter into rest till they believe it, and that self-salvation depends on their continuing to hold fast the profession of their faith, without wavering. Show them that in *life,* and in *death,* nothing can give *peace* but *believing,* and *that* with the *heart;* show them that, in consequence of unbelief, multitudes of the purchased inheritance are miserable *in life, in death,* and *in the resurrection.* Let them hear the voice of our unerring Teacher, who assures us that, if they die in their sins, where he is they cannot come; show them that, if they die in *unbelief,* they die in their sins, and, therefore, where he is they cannot come, for where he is is fulness of joy. If they should quibble with you, and insist on it that, as God, he must be everywhere, tell them, if you think such triflers are worth your notice, that *state* and *place* are not synonymous.

"There are many who call themselves believers of the truth, who are as much engaged in doing the work of our Grand Adversary, — in weakening the force of the testimony of God, by either leaving out of their creeds a great part thereof, or explaining it away, — as any of its most virulent opposers. When I hear what such and such preach, in the character of Universalists, I am shocked, I

am frightened. Nothing can be more anti-Scriptural. Such doctrines deserve all that the enemy has said of them; and when *I*, following the lead of divine revelation, am obliged to declare the contrary, on a supposition that I must have taught what those who profess to be with me preach, it is declared that *I* have changed my principles. . . . How painful, then, must be my feelings when I find so many teaching that, Jesus having done all, there remains nothing for us to do; and if there was, it is of no great consequence, for we shall all be happy in death; so we have nothing more to do than to eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die; that the judgment is past already, and everything of that nature, testified to in the Scriptures, is not to be understood as it is expressed; that, as for the teaching of the Apostles, it is nothing to us, no farther than it consists with our convenience; that we have nothing to do with anything in the Scripture if it means anything else than what respects Jesus Christ as our Saviour. How very painful must it be to me to hear that the friend I am writing to, should, in whole or in part, be leavened with this leaven. You are, I am persuaded, an honest man; you will give, I trust, due attention to what I have written, and do me the justice to believe that I am, with real sincere affection, your friend and brother in our Saviour."

Subsequently, Mr. Reynolds visited Boston, and officiated in Mr. Murray's pulpit. The latter refers to him, and his preaching, in an affectionate and appreciative manner, in his "Letters and Sketches," vol. ii. p. 345.

Shippie Townsend, a block-maker, in Boston, was for several years a Sandemanian. He was a man of fair education, and a terse writer. After becoming a Universalist, probably about 1782, he occasionally preached

in Boston and Gloucester. He was a Rellyan, and was probably the first layman to wield the pen in exposition and defence of Universalism in New England. From 1785 to 1793, he published ten or more pamphlets, which, in 1794, he gathered into a volume of three hundred and seventy-six pages, under the title of "Gospel News." He died at an advanced age, in 1800.

CHAPTER IV.

1787–1790.

Mr. Murray's arrangement for Preaching in Boston. — Rev. John Smalley's pamphlets against Universalism. — The Session of the Association in 1787, probably its Last Session. — Mr. Winchester goes to England. — Mr. Murray visits Philadelphia. — Favorable reception of Universalism in New York. — Rev. Robert Annan's pamphlet against Universalism. — William Pitt Smith, M. D., publishes "The Universalist." — Sketch of Dr. Smith's Life. — Mr. Murray at Portsmouth, N. H. — Jonathan Mitchell Sewall supplies the Pulpit at Portsmouth. — His fame as a Poet. — Mr. Murray's estimate of Noah Parker. — Confesses that Rev. John Tyler and Himself are the only Preachers united in Sentiment. — The Rellyanism of Rev. David Evans. — Rellyanism not Acceptable to the People. — Mr. Murray again in Legal Trouble on account of performing Marriage Ceremonies. — He sails for England. — His Preaching there. — Relief sought and obtained for him from the Massachusetts Legislature. — His return from England, and his Re-ordination. — He is importuned to Move to Philadelphia. — His statement of the Labor imposed on him. — Rev. Duncan McLean. — Rev. Artis Seagrave. — Morgan Edwards on Mr. Seagrave. — Rev. George Richards. — Rev. David Ballou. — Steps taken towards a Convention in Philadelphia. — Convention held in 1790. — Articles of Faith and Plan of Church Government adopted. — Composition of the Convention. — The Trinitarian bias of the Articles of Faith. — Rev. Elihu Palmer. — John Fitch, and the Philadelphia Deists. — Objection to the Articles of Faith, in Boston. — Mr. Murray a Sabellian. — Spread of Universalism among the Baptists. — Rev. Nicholas Cox. — Rev. William Worth. — Renewal of Efforts to Settle Mr. Murray in Philadelphia. — His Compensation in New England. — Dr. Benjamin Rush. — Mr. Murray's Letter. — Bachelor's Hall. — Samuel Wetherill's attack on Rellyanism. — Mr. Murray in New York, and with President Washington. — The Address to the President, and his Reply. — William Eugene Imlay. — Mr. Murray's Enthusiastic Reception in Connecticut. — His alarm at the Errors creeping in among Universalists. — Richard Gridley. — Mr. Murray unable to Move to Philadelphia. — Further Legal Troubles. — Incorporation of the Church at Gloucester.

IN consequence of the death of Rev. Adams Streeter, who had for several years preached once a month in

Boston, the Committee of the Society wrote to the Gloucester friends, under date of Dec. 8, 1786, asking the consent of the latter that Mr. Murray visit them every third Sunday, "until He who received gifts for men, even for the rebellious, is pleased to bestow one upon us, when perhaps, by their changing, neither of us may be left destitute." The request was granted, and the arrangement thus made continued until January, 1788, when Mr. Murray was induced to divide his time and services equally between the two places, reserving to himself, as before, the privilege of temporary absence each year for the purpose of itinerant labors in several localities.

Connecticut seemed to furnish him a favorable field, and in consequence, Rev. John Smalley, of Berlin, made an attack on Universalism, in two published sermons, one in 1785, and the other in 1786. Rev. John Tyler encouraged Mr. Murray in his work, if he did not openly co-operate with him. Writing to him in September, 1786, he says: —

"There is now with us a Mr. Noah Murray, a preacher of Jesus Christ, statedly laboring in the Oblong,[1] and the adjacent parts. I am exceedingly pleased with him, and, considering his advantages, think him a very extraordinary man."

The Association at Oxford, in 1785, voted, as see preceding chapter, "to meet in Boston, the second Wednesday in September, 1786." Probably the meeting was held, but no record of its proceedings can be

[1] A name given to a tract of land seventy to eighty miles in length, by two in breadth, formerly belonging to Connecticut, now transferred to New York.

found, nor any mention of it in the letters of Mr. Murray, and others, written during that month. The following year, on the third of September, the Oxford Society chose "delegates for this society, to meet at Milford, at the Annual Association, on Wednesday next." All the information that has been obtained in regard to a meeting at that time and place, is from a letter written by Mr. Murray, from New York, Nov. 13, 1787, to a Philadelphia friend, in which, speaking of the friendliness of the clergy in that city towards him, and his sentiments, he says: —

"One of them spent the evening in my company since I came to town, and, though I related the story of the Convention, or Yearly Meeting, at Milford, this gentleman never said one word by way of opposition; but warmly urged me to visit him in a friendly way."

There is no further mention of this Association anywhere, and the presumption is, that it held no other session. What are believed to be sufficient reasons for this conclusion, will be given farther on.

In July, 1787, Mr. Winchester surprised and startled his congregation in Philadelphia, by announcing his intention of making an immediate trip to England. In less than forty-eight hours from the announcement of his purpose, he had embarked on a vessel bound for London. It is said that he left his pulpit in Philadelphia in charge of his half-brother, Moses; but of this there is some doubt. At all events, the church was soon destitute of a regular ministry, and although there were zealous laymen who were able and willing to conduct religious service on the Lord's Day, the congregation dwindled away, and but few remained to keep the

organization alive. A Philadelphia correspondent of Mr. Murray wrote to him that Mr. Winchester's course "has in a manner dissolved one of the most thriving congregations in this city."

To strengthen and encourage the scattering flock, and particularly to assist his personal friends in keeping up an interest in the work, Mr. Murray visited and labored in Philadelphia in September and October of that year. A few in the congregation did not sympathize with Mr. Murray's views; but the majority were solicitous for him to remove to Philadelphia, and were confident that abundant success would attend his labors. Some encouragement was doubtless given that he would accept their call. Stopping at New York, on his return to Gloucester, he writes from there to a Philadelphia friend, Nov. 13, 1787: —

"Before I leave this city, I must inform you that our friends here increase very fast indeed. Appearances here are as much in favor of a spread of gospel light as in your city; the congregation as large. The City Hall is as large as the Lodge, and full as attractive. Many urge me very warmly to abide here. This morning, I was waited on by a number of gentlemen, who, hearing that I had it in contemplation to reside in Philadelphia, proposed that, if I would divide my time between this city and that, they would purchase a vacant meeting-house in this city for me. You would be astonished to see the spirit of inquiry there is in this place. . . . On the whole, my friend, our Saviour has blest my poor labors in this place full as much as in any place I have labored in for many years past, both in public and in private. Surely, surely, this is the Lord's doings! No wonder it is marvellous in our eyes! And still, perhaps,

our Saviour has some things for me to do. I see no prospect of getting away from this place; and shall not, I suppose, till the work that God sees fit to do by me, in this place, at this time, is accomplished. It is not for me to dictate."

During this year, two publications appeared,— one in Philadelphia, opposing Universalism, and one in New York, in its support. The former was written by Rev. Robert Annan, a Presbyterian clergyman, and was entitled "Brief Animadversions on the Doctrine of Universal Salvation; in which it is proved to be utterly repugnant to the principles of moral government, and inconsistent with the Word of God." It was a well-written pamphlet, of fifty-five pages.

The work in advocacy of Universalism was by William Pitt Smith, M. D., of New York, and was entitled "The Universalist. In Seven Letters to Amyntor." It was a duodecimo volume of three hundred and five pages. It opposes the infinity of sin; insists that eternal punishment is an impeachment of God's character; that the doctrines of the Universalists do not remove any real motives to virtue, but present such as are capable of exerting a powerful influence on the mind and character. Many objections to Universalism are fully stated, and fairly answered; and the book concludes with copious extracts from the works of Ramsay, Chauncy, and Winchester, the only writings on Universalism which the author had read, and with strictures on a work of Mr. Eckley, of Boston, against Chauncy's writings.

In the first edition of the "Modern History of Universalism," Mr. Whittemore said of Dr. Smith: —

"He was a student of physic under Dr. Joseph Young, and was attached to the General Hospital Department of the Army of the United States during the Revolutionary War, in which he served as surgeon's mate, under his preceptor, Dr. Young. He afterwards participated, as a partner of Dr. Young, in an extensive medical practice in the city of New York.[1] His professional talents, his literary acquirements, his character for honor, honesty, and philanthropy, were so extensively known, acknowledged, and approved, that he became very popular, and gained a political influence which he was ambitious to use for the benevolent purpose of ameliorating the condition of the human species. He was elected a member of the Legislature for the year 1796, and was a strenuous advocate of the bill providing for the abolition of slavery. His unremitting zeal and untiring exertions for the attainment of that philanthropic object were regarded as prominent among the causes which produced his death. Anxious to fulfil all the duties which had devolved on him, on the morning of the day on which the bill above mentioned was to be discussed in the Assembly, which was sitting in the city of New York, he rose very early, with a view to visit all his patients in time to enable him to take an active part in the debate on that important and interesting question. He spared himself no time to breakfast or dine. The day was wet, cold, and stormy. Drenched to the skin, he took his seat in the house, and sat all day in his wet clothes, was taken sick even before he concluded his speech, and, after a few days' severe indisposition, died in February, 1796, at the age of thirty-six years" (pp. 381, 382).

Mr. Murray returned to Gloucester early in December.

[1] Dr. J. W. Francis, in his Old New York, says that Dr. Smith was also "Professor of Materia Medica in Columbia College," in that city.

On the 16th of that month, he writes to a friend in Philadelphia : —

"I was but one Sunday at home before I set out for Portsmouth, where formerly dwelt my greatly valued friend and fellow-laborer, Mr. Parker. God, in his providence, has raised up a man to supply his place, whom I should have least expected; but God's ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts. He will send by whom he will send, and he does all things well. The gentleman that now preaches in Mr. Parker's meeting is a Mr. Sewall, an eminent lawyer, and a very distinguished poet; but his soul is in love with divine truth, and he says it is his meat and drink to do the will of God. I wish it may be the will of God to keep this faithful man from the evil that is in this world; then, indeed, he will be a burning and a shining light."

Mr. Parker died, as previously stated, Aug. 17, 1787; and at a parish meeting held Oct. 9, a committee was appointed to invite Mr. Sewall to speak on Sundays. It is generally believed that he did not accept;[1] and it is very probable that he did not put himself under obligation for permanent pulpit service; but the foregoing shows that he did not utterly refuse to aid the society in this way.

Jonathan Mitchell Sewall, who is thus referred to, was born in Salem, Mass., in 1748.

"He was," says C. W. Brewster, in his "Rambles about Portsmouth," "of high standing as a lawyer, but no less eminent as a statesman and poet. He was the writer of the stirring song of the Revolution entitled 'War and Washington,' beginning, 'Vain Britons, boast

[1] See an article in The Christian Leader, Nov. 15, 1873, p. 719.

no longer,'[1] etc., which was sung in every camp throughout the country."

Drake, in his "Biographical Dictionary," says of Mr. Sewall: —

"His occasional poetic pieces, some of which attained great popularity, were collected and published in 1801; many were of a political cast, and were printed in most of the Federal gazettes from Maine to Georgia. He was noted for wit, and was eminent in social qualities. In his epilogue to the 'Tragedy of Cato,' written in 1778, occurs the well-known couplet, —

> 'No pent-up Utica contracts our powers,
> But the whole boundless continent is ours.'"

Duyckinck, in his work on "Biography," says of Mr. Sewall: —

"It is a name that should be better known and cherished, for it was borne by one whose lyrics warmed the patriotism, and cheered the hearts, of the soldiers of the Revolution in the perils of the battle and the privations of the camp."

In 1789, in anticipation of a visit of President Washington to Portsmouth, no little discussion occurred as to the title by which he should be addressed, and several were suggested. Mr. Sewall made the following impromptu answer: —

> "Fame spread her wings, and with her trumpet blew,
> 'Great Washington is come! what praise is due?
> What title shall he have?' She paused, and said,
> 'Not one! His name alone strikes every title dead.'"

[1] "Vain Britons, boast no longer, with proud indignity,
By land your conqu'ring legions, your matchless strength at sea,
Since we, your braver sons incens'd, our swords have girded on.
Huzza, huzza, huzza, huzza, for War and Washington."

Mr. Sewall was greatly interested in the establishment of the Universalist Society in Portsmouth, and wrote several hymns, which were printed on slips and sung in the Sunday services. He died in 1808.

Immediately after the death of Mr. Parker, Mr. Murray wrote to a friend in London: —

"When I last addressed you, the name of Mr. N. [Noah Parker] stood foremost among the number of the preachers of the truth as it is in Jesus, in this New World. But since that period, having fought the good fight, and kept the faith, he hath finished his course, and laid hold on that eternal life which was given him, and will be given to all that love the appearing of the Lord Jesus.

"I have suffered no bereavement since I came into this country, beside the death of our dear departed friend, Mr. Relly, which has affected me so deeply. I mourn with those who mourn; how great this affliction to his family, to his friends. The Sunday before last they buried him, and last Sunday was the first Sunday his hearers have been without a preacher since the Redeemer opened his mouth and enabled him to show forth his most holy praise. The gout thrown into his stomach became his passport to blessedness.

"Never did man labor more diligently than our departed friend in the promulgation of the gospel of divine truth, both in private and in public; it was his sole delight; and this he did without fee or reward, never receiving from the people the smallest pecuniary consideration. He was blessed with ability and inclination to follow the example of the Apostle Paul more closely than any individual I ever knew. But, alas! his congregation is now left quite destitute. God is able to raise up such another, but at present there is no prospect of such an

event. We know no one who preaches the truth who would take his place, and if any were disposed, they would expect to live by the gospel.

"I do not now know of a single preacher in this country, if I except Mr. T. [Tyler], of Connecticut, who is with me in sentiment respecting gospel truth, although there are many private Christians who are happy in the belief of those glad tidings which the angels delighted to proclaim. There are, as I informed you in my last, who preach another gospel, who assure us that all mankind will finally, through their own doings and sufferings, enter into life, forasmuch as God willeth that all men should be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth. Of this number is Mr. W. [Winchester], of whom I have spoken in former letters, and who is now in England. He is a zealous man, and an animated preacher. We can rarely discover any difference between him and the Methodists, except where they speak of the never-ending torments of the wicked. Here he differs from them, for he supposes the wicked will be tormented only a few thousand years, or ages, or millions of years, according to the magnitude of their transgressions, until being brought to love and serve God acceptably, they will be forever happy with the Lord.

"I am, I do assure you, beyond expression distressed. What are we to do?"[1]

Unless Mr. Murray referred to his personal acquaintance with the preachers, he must have forgotten Rev. David Evans, who was, beyond question, the keenest and ablest Rellyan in the country, when he said that Mr. Tyler was the only preacher who was with him in sentiment.

It is not at all probable that Mr. Winchester's system

[1] Letters and Sketches, vol. ii. pp. 276, 277.

as a whole was adopted by many of the preachers, for he had published but little at that time, and few understood just what his theory was until some seven or eight years later, when his writings were more numerous and more industriously circulated. But, as was stated in the preceding chapter, nearly all the preachers were converts from the orthodox sects, especially from the Baptists, and, with the exception of Caleb Rich, who was original in his interpretations and exegesis, their theories differed in little or nothing from what they had always held, except in regard to the universal extent and efficacy of Christ's saving work. Rellyanism was felt to be a forced and factitious mode of interpreting the Scriptures, and except as to its final results, was not generally accepted. The general agitation of the question of human destiny among nearly all the sects, as intimated in the first chapter, had in a great measure prepared the masses who were thinking on the subject to gladly accept Murray's message; but further thought led them to more rational grounds for their conclusions, and hence, much to his surprise and distress, they discarded his premises, but held to his conclusion that the ultimate redemption of the world was the doctrine of the Bible. This aversion to Rellyanism grew more and more intense and extensive, till, as we shall see as we proceed, it was wholly abandoned.

At the period of which we are now writing, however, — the close of the year 1787, — Mr. Murray had another source of trouble. No sooner had his suit against the First Parish in Gloucester been decided, than his enemies began to threaten him with legal trouble for performing marriage ceremonies, alleging that he was unordained,

and was therefore acting illegally. A case was finally selected and taken to the Supreme Court, where a verdict was obtained against him, and he was sentenced to pay a fine of fifty pounds. This fact, and his conclusion with reference to it, he thus communicated to a Philadelphia correspondent, January 2, 1788: —

"I told you of a prosecution commenced against me by my enemies on account of marrying. The arbitrary judges will not, it seems, consider me an ordained minister because I am not ordained in their way, so I am in consequence condemned and obliged to pay heavy fines or leave the State till the General Court grants me redress, which I trust they will in the interim, as they will not meet till February. I intend taking a voyage to London, and spend the winter there and come out in the spring. If the Legislature should not grant me redress I must leave this State, and in that case hope to take up my abode in your city on my return from England. I wish I could have had previous notice of this time enough to have given our friends an opportunity to write to Mr. Winchester, but I never thought of it till yesterday."

On the 6th of January he set sail for England. "Noble provision was made for him by the Bostonians, and all expenses of the voyage defrayed," says Mrs. Murray. Landing in Falmouth, after a long and boisterous voyage, Mr. Murray was received with great kindness although in the midst of strangers, being warmly commended to all Christian people by letters from the churches in Boston and Gloucester. During his stay abroad he preached in many places, but generally, if not always, as he had at first done in America, — without avowing positively his belief in Universalism.

Mrs. Murray quotes from his diary on this point as follows: —

"The numerous friends with whom I occasionally sojourn are as anxious to detain me with them, and lament the necessity of my departure, precisely as did my American friends; their hearts swell with transport while I *simply* declare the gospel of the grace of God, and they reiterate their expressions of admiration of the gracious words which God enables me to utter, in like manner as did the good Gloucesterian elder, Mr. Warner, on my first visit to that place. We mingle our supplications and addresses, our thanksgivings and our praises, and our hearts burn within us while we converse of the goodness of our God and the gracious purposes of redeeming love. Surely it would be ill-judged, if not cruel, in such circumstances to dash the cup of felicity from the lips of these humble dependents upon the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, because perhaps they do not see to the end of the divine purposes. I never will preach anything but the gospel of God our Saviour anywhere; but I will leave those dear people to draw their conclusions, and, in the interim, I will feed them with the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby. . . . The people everywhere hear with AMERICAN ATTENTION. Clergymen, wherever I sojourn, are generally my hosts. Gospel, unadulterated gospel, is pleasant to the believing soul; I content myself with showing that man is lost by sin, that the law is the ministration of death, that the gospel is a divine declaration of life by Jesus Christ to every creature."[1]

Mrs. Murray adds: —

"When the clergymen with whom Mr. Murray associated during his last residence in England became ascer-

[1] Life of Murray, edition of 1870, pp. 346, 347.

tained of his *full and comprehensive views of the magnitude and extent of the redeeming plan*, although very few adopted his ideas, yet they still continued warmly attached to the preacher; and the letters they addressed to him after his return to America, which are still in being, would fill a volume."[1]

When the Legislature of Massachusetts convened in February, the following petition was presented: —

"*To the Honorable Senate and the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, assembled in Boston in February*, 1788: John Murray, of Gloucester, in the County of Essex, would humbly represent to your Honors, that about seventeen years ago he came into this country, which he considered as the asylum of religion and benevolence; that on his arrival he began to preach the gospel of peace, in doing which he met with many cordial friends, some of whom, namely, a society of Christians in Gloucester, distinguished themselves by their uniform attachment to the message and the messenger. And after your petitioner had occasionally labored among them for a considerable time, they associated together as an Independent Church, built a meeting-house, and invited your petitioner to reside with them as their settled minister; and in the month of December, in the year 1780, did *appoint*, *set apart*, and *ordain* him to the work of the ministry, and to be their teacher of piety, religion, and morality; that ever since that period he has considered himself, and has been considered by the people he has statedly labored amongst, as their ordained minister; and though your petitioner has, on sundry occasions, visited and labored amongst his Christian friends in other places, it has always been with the consent of his people, — they still looking on him and he

[1] Life of Murray, edition of 1870, p. 349.

on himself as their ordained minister. It also appears that the people among whom your petitioner has frequently labored have considered him in the same light, as they have formally requested license of his people of Gloucester, who, after consultation, granted that license. Another circumstance that tended to confirm your petitioner in the belief of his being *an ordained minister* in the strictest sense of the word, and according to the letter and spirit of the law, was the verdict given in favor of him and his people by the Honorable Supreme Court and jury, when, after suffering much abuse from their persecuting opponents in Gloucester, they were reduced to the necessity of applying to the laws of their country for redress and protection. But their opponents, dissatisfied with the verdict then obtained, demanded a review; after which review the former verdict was confirmed by the full and decided opinion of the honorable court given in their favor.

"Being thus, by constitutional right and legal decision, established as an independent minister, settled with, and ordained by, the joint suffrages of the members of that religious society, your petitioner supposed his troubles from his persecuting enemies were at an end. And upon consulting counsel learned in the law, who gave it as their decided opinion that he was an ordained minister, he proceeded to perform the ceremony of marriage to such of his hearers who made application to him for that purpose. But some of his opponents, unacquainted with the independent mode of *ordination,* and presuming your petitioner was not ordained, because the same ceremonies were not made use of in his ordination to the use of which they were accustomed, brought the question of your petitioner's right of officiating as an ordained minister before the judges of the Supreme Judicial Court, who gave it as their opinion that he was not an ordained minister, in the sense of the law, as the forms of his

ordination were not sufficiently notorious. Your petitioner, and the people who ordained him, conceived his ordination was sufficiently notorious, as the article was subscribed by every member of the society; and the honorable court considered him a public teacher of piety, religion, and morality. The recent adjudication of the honorable judges has involved your petitioner's little flock in Gloucester in expense and exquisite distress, and your petitioner is ruined, unless your Honors can interfere for his relief. He must not only satisfy the heavy penalty already forfeited to his said opponents and prosecutors, but he is liable to repeated forfeitures of like penalties for every marriage he has performed since he has conceived himself the ordained minister of that people, which must involve his friends in expense, or consign him to a jail. Nor is this all; supposing his ordination invalid, he is, by the letter of the law, liable to ignominious punishment. Now, as equity is said to be that interference of the supreme power which alleviates where the law, by being too comprehensive, has involved a case to which it was not, perhaps, meant to extend; and as he, and his people, his counsel, and the world at large, supposed him ordained as much as an Episcopalian, or any other teacher, however different the mode of ordination, he most humbly prays your Honors to indemnify him for any farther prosecution for any marriage he may have solemnized under his supposed right, and by this means rescue him from the persecuting power of his malignant adversaries, restore the exercise of religious rites to his oppressed and afflicted people, establish in the Commonwealth, in which he has long had his residence, that peace which has been broken by the malice of his enemies. Your petitioner would in person have waited on such committee of your Honors as may be appointed to consider this petition, but his well-grounded fears that prosecutions would be multiplied

upon him by the zeal of his religious adversaries, has necessitated him to absent himself from the country of his adoption and his dear people, until such time as the clemency of your Honors might be obtained in his behalf."

The congregation in Gloucester also sent in a petition in aid of the foregoing, and the result was the adoption of the following: —

"COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

"*In the House of Representatives, March* 17, 1788.

"Whereas, John Murray and others have represented to this court that the said Murray, esteeming himself legally qualified, had solemnized certain marriages, and that, by a decision had in the Superior Judicial Court, it was determined that the said Murray had no such authority, praying that he might be indemnified; Resolved, That the said John Murray be, and he hereby is, indemnified from all pains and penalties which he may have incurred on account of having solemnized any marriages, as aforesaid, for which there has not been any prosecution commenced, or had; and the said Murray may, upon trial for any of the offences aforesaid, give this resolution, in evidence, upon the general issue; which shall have the same operation as if specially pleaded.

"Sent up for concurrence.

"JAMES WARREN, *Speaker.*

"*In Senate, March* 27, 1788.

"Read and concurred.

"SAMUEL ADAMS, *President.*

"Approved.

"JOHN HANCOCK."

On Mr. Murray's return to America, the voyage was uncommonly protracted by head winds. John Adams, afterwards President of the United States, was, with his wife, on board; and, at his solicitation, Mr. Murray preached every Sunday. This was the commencement of a long and intimate acquaintance with this eminent citizen and his family. Arriving in Boston in July,

"the voice of exoneration and freedom bade him welcome, and the glad acclamations of joy resounded among his congratulating and most affectionate friends. A summons from the Governor to attend a select party at his house met him on the day of his arrival, and every liberal mind partook the rational hilarity of the moment."[1] (Memoir, p. 350.)

Some time after his return, Mr. Murray, in writing to a friend in London in regard to the success of his petition to the Legislature, said: —

"I have been the happy instrument of which the God of peace and mercy has made use, to give a death-wound to that hydra, parochial persecution. Persons now, under the denomination of Independents, who believe and bear witness to the truth, as it is in Jesus, are endowed with every privilege possessed by the national church or established religion; and, of course, my situation since my return has been abundantly more eligible than it was previous to my departure."[2]

[1] Almost his first act, after his arrival, was to record in the Town Clerk's book, in Gloucester, his intention of marriage with Mrs. Judith Stevens, a daughter of his friend, Winthrop Sargent. They were married the 6th of October, at Salem, Mass. Mrs. Murray was an intelligent and gifted woman. For an account of her literary abilities and fame, see The Universalist Quarterly, April, 1881, pp. 194–213, and April, 1882, pp. 140–151.

[2] Letters and Sketches, vol. ii. pp. 351–352.

The church at Gloucester, determined to avoid all further questioning of the legal status and rights of Mr. Murray, resolved to renew his ordination. At the trial of their suit against the First Parish, and in their "Appeal to the Impartial Public," they had taken the position that ordination consisted in the choosing and setting apart of a religious teacher, and not in any ceremony attendant on such choice. In the "Appeal," they quoted from the Cambridge Platform of 1646, which was the acknowledged standard of the standing order: —

"Ordination we account nothing else but the solemn putting a man into his place and office in the church, whereunto he hath a right before by election. The essence and substance of the outward calling of an ordinary officer in the church, doth not consist in ordination, but in his voluntary and free election by the church, and his accepting of that election; whereupon is founded that relation between pastor and flock, — between such a minister and such a people. Ordination doth not constitute an officer, nor give him the essentials of his office. The Apostles were elders, without imposition of hands by men."

To it they added: —

"This was the sense of the country at that time, and it was so prevalent that, although the platform was obtained, yet it could not be done without preserving these sentiments. But as the word 'ordain' signifies no more than to appoint, we conceive that the election, and not the laying on of hands, makes the ordination complete. See sixth and thirteenth chapters of Acts."

This conviction they still retained; but were willing

to so far comply with the position of the Court, that their former ordination had not been sufficiently public, as to give to the reordination ceremony the utmost publicity in their power, by publishing in the "Columbian Sentinel," of Boston, the following, in the issue of that paper, Jan. 3, 1789: —

"Last Thursday week, Mr. John Murray was ordained to the pastoral charge of the Independent Church of Christ in Gloucester. After Mr. Murray had prayed, and one of the congregation had announced the intention of the meeting, and presented him formally with a call, Mr. Murray replied: —

"'Persuaded of the truth of the declaration made by the compilers of the shorter catechism, that God's works of providence are his most holy, wise, and powerful, preserving and governing all his *creatures*, and all their actions; and having a full conviction that the affairs of the church are, in an especial manner, under his immediate direction; and that you, my Christian friends and brethren, are now, as formerly, under the directing influence of that divine Spirit, which, taking of the things of Jesus, and showing them unto me, constrained me to become a preacher of the everlasting gospel, and directed you to set me *apart*, and ordain me to be your minister; I now again, with humble gratitude to my divine Master, and grateful affection for you, my long-tried and faithful Christian friends and brethren, most cordially accept of this call.'

"One of the committee then read the vote of the church: — 'Resolved, that we, the proprietors of the Independent meeting-house in Gloucester, the members of the church and congregation usually attending there for the purpose of divine worship, do, by virtue of that power vested in us by the great High Priest of our profession, the Bishop of our souls, and the great and only

Head of the church, and according to the institutions of the first churches in New England, and in perfect conformity to the third article of the Declaration of Rights, in this public manner, solemnly *elect* and *ordain*, constitute and appoint, Mr. John Murray, of said Gloucester, clerk, to be our settled minister, pastor, and teaching elder; to preach the word of God, and to inculcate lessons and instructions of piety, religion, and morality, on the congregation; and to do, perform, and discharge all the duties and offices which of right belong to any other minister of the gospel, or public teacher of piety, religion, and morality; and it is hereby intended, and understood, that the authority and rights hereby given to the said Mr. John Murray, to be our settled ordained minister, and public teacher, are to remain in full force so long as he shall continue to preach the word of God, and dispense instructions of piety, religion, and morality, conformable to our opinions, and no longer.'

"The committee then solemnly presented him the Bible, saying on its presentation, 'Dear sir, we present you these sacred Scriptures as a solemn seal of your ordination to the ministry of the New Testament, and the sole directory of your faith and practice.' His acceptance was affecting, — as what comes from the heart reaches the heart.

"'With my full soul I thank our merciful God for this inestimable gift. With grateful transport I press it to my bosom. I receive it as the copy of my FATHER'S WILL, as the deed of an incorruptible inheritance, as the unerring guide to my feet, and lantern to my paths. Dear, precious treasure! thou hast been my constant support in every trying hour, and a never-failing source of true consolation. I thank you, most sincerely do I thank you, for this confirming seal, this sure directory; and I pray that the Spirit which dictated these

sacred pages, may enable me to make the best use thereof.' A sermon by Mr. Murray, from Luke x. 2, succeeded, 'The harvest is great, but the laborers are few,' etc. etc.

"The solemnity, attention, and Christian demeanor that attended the whole transaction of the ordination, and every other occurrence of the day, gave universal satisfaction to a numerous audience."

Mr. Murray had hardly settled down to his work again in Gloucester before he was importuned once more to remove to Philadelphia, and earnestly pleaded with to give that city a portion of his time, if he could not take up his permanent abode there. He replied, early in January, that he was under obligation to divide his Sundays between Gloucester and Boston; and then added: —

"This, one would suppose, would be sufficient for me at this period of my laboring life. I have, however, besides this, to visit, when I am able, sundry congregations in various parts of the country, as Newport, Providence, Cumberland, Milford, Grafton, Oxford, Newtown, Salem, Portsmouth, etc.

"There is no prospect of my being an idler as long as I have any strength left. I have been many years warmly engaged in the promulgation of divine truth, according to my knowledge of it. I have freely spent my youth, my health, my strength, in that employ. My Saviour, my gracious Master, has been graciously pleased at last to indulge me with a *home*, — with a wife to make this home agreeable, — for which my soul feels grateful. I have it still in my heart to visit many; but were I to indulge this wish, — that is, supposing myself at my own disposal, — I should leave the people among whom I labor a *laughing-stock* to

the public. I should *disappoint* some, *disgust* others, and *ruin*, at present, a very thriving cause."

The italicized words in this last sentence are a quotation to his correspondent of the words which the latter had just employed in describing the disastrous results of Mr. Winchester's course in leaving a field in which there was ample and satisfactory employment.

In the same letter, Mr. Murray sends messages to two new preachers, who had been mentioned by his correspondent. They were Duncan McLean, and Artis Seagrave. The former was then residing in Frederick County, Virginia, near Winchester, where he had been settled as a Baptist preacher. He became a Universalist about the year 1786. In 1787, the Virginia Association of Baptists notified the Philadelphia Association to beware of Duncan McLean, late one of their ministers, "who has embraced the doctrine of Universal Salvation." In 1790, he was living in Loudon County, the same State, and preaching statedly to large audiences, in Alexandria, and in several other localities. In 1791, he accepted a call to the pastorate of the church in Philadelphia; but subsequently "reconsidered the matter, on account of his family affairs, the great work, and his usefulness in that part of God's vineyard, and some other reasons." After 1792, at which time he was still in Loudon County, we lose all trace of him.

Artis Seagrave had been pastor of the Baptist church at Cape May, N. J., from 1785 to 1788, when he resigned, and removed to Pittsgrove, in the same State. In 1791 he was at Pilesgrove, in 1792–1799,

at Wrightstown, after which we have no knowledge of his whereabouts. Morgan Edwards says of Artis Seagrave : —

"He took oversight of the Cape May church in 1785, and resigned in 1788, to go to Oldman's Creek, where he now (1792) practises physic and preaches to a branch of Pittsgrove Church. He was much thought of at the Cape till he began to preach up the extravagant vagaries of the Rellites. He was born in Pittsgrove, Feb. 1, 1755, and there ordained in 1782." [1]

Under date of April 9, Mr. Murray thus makes mention of a new preacher in Boston : —

"I heard a gentleman preach last Sunday morning in the meeting I labor in, — in consequence of my being ill, — who, for matter and manner, exceeded any I had ever heard. I have no acquaintance with him; that is, personal. I have heard of him; he has been some time a schoolmaster in the metropolis, and before they get a settled minister in the North Episcopal Church, he officiates there. Some of my hearers in this place being acquainted with him, invited him, in my absence, to supply the pulpit. My being ill last Sunday morning gave me an opportunity of hearing him myself, and I was exceedingly pleased. I hope he will be a sensible, warm, able advocate of the truth as it is in Jesus. He labors, however, poor man, under a difficulty in his first setting out, — he is poor, and has a large family ; he is, therefore, obliged to be very much confined to his school. However, we know not what is in the womb of Providence. He is young, a man of great natural and acquired abilities, and I hope, a man of principle; so that he may be, indeed, a burning and shining light. I had often heard of Mr. George Richards as a very able schoolmaster, a man of

[1] Baptists in New Jersey, pp. 43, 44.

abilities, etc.; but never till last Christmas Day did I hear of him as a preacher of the truth as it is in Jesus. Who knows, my friend, but the Lord of the harvest may yet send forth some able laborers into his harvest? Let it be our business to pray that he would."

George Richards, who is thus brought to our notice, was born in or near Newport, R. I., about 1755. He studied the higher branches of learning under the private tuition of a clergyman in Newport, who gave him, as he afterwards expressed it, "as extensive advantages as I could have enjoyed under Dr. Manning, President of Brown University." During a portion of the Revolutionary War he was in the navy as purser and chaplain, under Commodore Manly; and at the close of the war he went to Boston and engaged in teaching. He was thrice married, and had a numerous family. Of his fifth child, Sarah Ward, born at Boston, Oct. 27, 1788, he says, "She was the first child dedicated by John Murray in the Universal Church, Boston;" and of his eighth, Alice Jane, born at Portsmouth, N. H., June 22, 1797: "The first child dedicated by the Rev. Mr. Murray, Oct. 25, 1797, at the Universal meeting-house in Portsmouth, N. H., Vaughn Street."

Although the name of George Richards has no place in any "Dictionary of American Authors," or "Cyclopædia of American Literature," and is now almost forgotten, except by those who are interested in our church history, he was, as a contributor to the periodical press of his day, — as the "Massachusetts Magazine," and the weekly papers of Boston, — and as editor of "The Free Mason's Magazine," eminent in his day as a poet, patriot, and Mason. In 1871, the Librarian of the Amer-

ican Antiquarian Society, in his annual report, believing that "George Richards is better entitled to a place among the writers of his time in prose and verse than some who have been ostentatiously commemorated," made brief mention of his literary work. The following year, Rev. Edward Everett Hale, in the February number of the "Old and New," called attention to "the name and fame of that forgotten poet of American freedom, and harmonious elegist of General Washington, the Rev. George Richards;" and transcribed a few passages from his writings, "as illustrative at once of the condition of American poetry at the end of the last century, and of the modes of thought which then prevailed about Washington himself."

Mr. Richards remained in Boston till the fall of 1793, teaching school and occasionally preaching, when he became pastor of the Universalist church in Portsmouth, N. H. For some unknown reason his ordination was deferred till July, 1799. The parish records give the following account of the ordaining service: —

"*Voted*, that M. Parry, M. Woodman, P. Coues, J. Libby, and John Raynes, be a committee to assist in the ordination of Mr. Richards, and, in behalf of this society, to deliver him the Bible as the only rule of his preaching and practice; and on his receiving the same, to publicly declare him the ordained minister and teacher of this society, and that he is fully authorized and empowered to administer all gospel ordinances, and has all the rights and privileges of a temporal nature that the laws of the State allow to any other settled and ordained minister within the same.

"Thursday, the 11th day of July, was set apart, with submission to Divine Providence, for the ordaining ser-

vices. Accordingly, at ten o'clock of said day, the society assembled at their usual place of worship. Brother Jeremiah Libby, as one of the society's committee, introduced the business of the meeting by a brief declaration of its purposes. Elder Edward [Edmund] Pillsbury, of Northwood, N. H., made the first prayer; Brother John Foster, of Taunton, Mass., preached a suitable discourse; Brother Libby delivered the Scriptures, assisted by the committee; Brother Richards returned a proper answer; Brother Foster delivered a becoming charge; Elder Pillsbury gave the right-hand of fellowship; Brother Foster offered a concluding prayer, after which Brother Richards pronounced the final blessing." [1]

Mr. Richards remained in Portsmouth till 1809, when he accepted an invitation to the pastorate of the church in Philadelphia, where also he taught school several years; and during a portion of the time was editor of a Masonic magazine. In 1814 the death of his wife and various disappointments, unsettled his reason, and in an insane hour he destroyed himself. He was a good man, and was held in high esteem by all his associates in the ministry.[2]

Rev. David Ballou was another accession to the Universalist ministry in 1789. He was a brother of Hosea, and thirteen years his senior. For ten years he preached in Richmond, N. H., and vicinity, and then removed to what is now called the town of Monroe, Mass., from

[1] Historical Discourse at the Centennial Celebration in Portsmouth, N. H., Nov. 16, 1873, by A. J. Patterson, D. D.; Universalist Quarterly, January, 1874, p. 75.

[2] See Century of Universalism, pp. 66–71, for an account of Mr. Richards' ministry in Philadelphia; and Whittemore's Life of Rev. Hosea Ballou, vol. i. pp. 399–402, for the latter's estimate of his character.

which place he itinerated over a large region. The late Dr. Whittemore said of him: —

"He was a man of rare intellectual powers, sagacious, cool, quick to see the fallacy of an argument, able to state his propositions clearly; in fine, he was what the world would call a close reasoner. But, as a speaker, he was not eloquent. In his moral character he was, we had almost said, blameless." [1]

He died Dec. 30, 1840, aged eighty-two years.

On Sunday, Sept. 6, 1789, at the close of services which had been conducted by Rev. Artis Seagrave, a meeting was held in the Lodge Hall, in Philadelphia, when

"it was made known to those present that the design of the meeting was to lay before them the propriety of writing and sending forth a circular letter to our friends in different parts of the continent holding like faith with us in the salvation and restoration of all things by Christ Jesus, inviting them to a conference or association, in order to agree on some general sentiment and form of church discipline, which may have a tendency to unite us more in the bonds of love and uniformity, and prove more to our edification and the declarative glory of God."

A committee was appointed to draft such a letter, who subsequently reported the following, and it was agreed that it should be sent "to such persons or societies as the committee may deem proper": —

"*Friends and Brethren*, — In the glorious belief of the final restitution of all things through our Lord Jesus, we address you at this time by the advice and with the consent of the brethren in the same belief in this place,

[1] Life of Hosea Ballou, vol. i. p. 31.

though not generally acquainted with you, but considering you as desirous to promote the truth and further the progress of genuine religion, on a subject which we doubt not has exercised your minds, in a measure as it has ours. You no doubt have long since seen and deplored the unsettled condition we are in, — without order, rule, or system, floating about on the waters of unsteady helps, to promote our knowledge, and unite us in one general church in the bonds of love and uniformity. Impressed with a sense of our state as a people, and induced to believe that the time is come that, by the blessing of our God, and the support and endeavors of one another, we may rise to, and become comforted in, the prospect of numbers being brought into the truth as it is in Jesus, —

"To accomplish this glorious purpose, we have had a meeting of our friends on the 6th of September last, and, taking the matter into our most serious consideration, it was there agreed unanimously to appoint four members to draw up and lay before the professors of our belief a letter for approbation, copies of which were to be taken and forwarded to the brethren respectively in different parts of the continent; and this being approved of, we, in behalf of them and ourselves, request you to send on to us your opinion of calling a general convention of suitable persons, to meet at some suitable place, on some particular time, to take our circumstances and situation into consideration, that we may be enabled thereby, as much as in our power lieth, to have ONE UNIFORM MODE OF DIVINE WORSHIP; ONE METHOD OF ORDAINING SUITABLE PERSONS TO THE MINISTRY; ONE CONSISTENT WAY OF ADMINISTERING THE LORD'S SUPPER, or whatever else may appear desirable to any when such convention meets, having regard to the practice of our Saviour, by endeavoring to build upon the broadest basis of Christian benevolence.

"That this may meet with your approbation, and that

the God of all grace and wisdom may bless these our weak endeavors, we subscribe ourselves your brethren in the universal love of that Redeemer who willeth all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.

"William Perkins,
"James Moore,
"Anthony Cuthbert,
"Israel Israel,
} *Committee.*"[1]

Favorable response being given, the Convention was held in the "Meeting-house in Lodge Alley," commencing on the twenty-fifth of May, 1790, and continued in session till the eighth of June. It was composed of seventeen persons, seven of whom were preachers, viz., John Murray, Gloucester, Mass.; Duncan McLean, Frederick County, Va.; Moses Winchester, Cohansey, N. J.; Artis Seagrave, Pilesgrove, N. J.; Nicholas Cox, Kingwood, N. J.; William Worth, Pittsgrove, N. J.; David Evans, New Britain, Penn. The laymen were: from Philadelphia, William Perkins, James Moore, Anthony Cuthbert, Israel Israel, Thomas Fitzgerald; Cohansey, N. J., Jedidiah Davis; Tom's River, N. J., William Eugene Imlay. There were three others, whose names are unknown, as the records are lost. The churches represented were: Boston, Gloucester, Mass.; Frederick County, Va.; Cohansey, N. J., Pilesgrove and Pennsneck, N. J.; Philadelphia, New Britain, Penn. Rev. William Worth was chosen Moderator, and Rev. Artis Seagrave, Clerk. The principal business transacted was the adoption of articles of faith, and a plan of church government, the consideration

[1] For an account of the correspondence which followed the issuing of this circular, see article on "Universalist Conventions and Creeds," in Universalist Quarterly for January, 1875.

of sundry recommendations, to be referred to the churches before final action, and the appointment of John Murray and William Eugene Imlay, to present an address to President Washington. With the exception of the address, these matters were at once published in pamphlet form, and subsequently republished in Boston. Both editions have long been out of print, and the following synopsis is therefore given. The "Introduction" is: —

"Under a deep sense of the unchangeable and universal love of God to mankind in a Redeemer, and in humble thankfulness to His kind providence in permitting us to assemble and deliberate, agreeably to the dictates of our consciences, without fear of civil or ecclesiastical power; We, the representatives of sundry societies in the United States, believing in the salvation of all men, convened on the twenty-fifth of May, 1790, in the city of Philadelphia, by an invitation from the brethren in the said city, holding the same doctrine, and having implored the direction and blessing of God upon our endeavors to extend the knowledge of His name, have adopted the following Articles, and Plan of Church Government:

CHAPTER I.

ARTICLES OF FAITH.

Sect. 1. *Of the* Holy Scriptures. — We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to contain a revelation of the perfections and will of God, and the rule of faith and practice.

Sect. 2. *Of the* Supreme Being. — We believe in One God, infinite in all his perfections; and that these perfections are all modifications of infinite, adorable, incomprehensible, and unchangeable Love.

Sect. 3. *Of the* MEDIATOR. — We believe that there is ONE MEDIATOR between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; who, by giving himself a ransom for all, hath redeemed them to God by his blood; and who, by the merit of his death, and the efficacy of his Spirit, will finally restore the whole human race to happiness.

Sect. 4. *Of the* HOLY GHOST. — We believe in the HOLY GHOST, whose office it is to make known to sinners the truth of their salvation, through the medium of the Holy Scriptures, and to reconcile the hearts of the children of men to God, and thereby to dispose them to genuine holiness.

Sect. 5. *Of* GOOD WORKS. — We believe in the obligation of the moral law, as the rule of life; and we hold that the love of God manifest to man in a Redeemer, is the best means of producing obedience to that law, and promoting a holy, active, and useful life."

Chapter II. contains a "Plan of Church Government," set forth in nine sections, embracing the following particulars: "Of a Church, The Officers of a Church, The Call and Ordination of the Officers of a Church, Of Divine Worship, Ordinances, The Admission and Exclusion of Members, Of Marriage, The Instruction of Children, The Communion of Churches."

"A church" was defined as consisting "of a number of believers, united by covenant, for the purposes of maintaining the public worship of God, the preaching of the gospel, ordaining officers, preserving order and peace among its members, and relieving the poor." The officers were "bishops" and "deacons." "The terms bishop, elder, minister, pastor, and teacher," were held to be the same, "intended only to express

the different capacities in which the same officer is called to act." Each church was empowered to decide on the "call, qualifications, and gifts, of those who wish to devote themselves to God in the ministry," and to "solemnly set apart and ordain such persons; and a certificate of such appointment shall be to them a sufficient ordination to preach the gospel, and to administer such ordinances, hereinafter mentioned, as to them may seem proper, wherever they may be called by Divine Providence."

"Deacons shall be chosen by the members of the church, and ordained in like manner as bishops or ministers. Their business — besides receiving and applying the pious and charitable contributions of the church for the support of the laborers of the gospel, and the relief of the poor — shall be to attend to the secular affairs of the church, to keep an exact register of all the persons who shall be born, baptized, admitted to communion, married, or who shall remove or die, belonging to the society; also, an account of the admission and dismission of members, and of all the business of the church."

With regard to the "ordinances," none were insisted on as obligatory; for, as a diversity of opinion had prevailed in all ages of the church, in regard to them, "and as this diversity of opinions has often been the means of dividing Christians, who were united by the same spirit in more essential articles," this plan proposed and agreed "to admit all such persons who hold the articles of our faith, and maintain good works, into membership, whatever their opinions may be as to the nature, form, or obligation of any of the ordinances." It was further agreed that, if a church, believing in the

ordinances, should have a minister who could not perform them "contrary to his conscience," "a neighboring minister, who shall hold like principles respecting the ordinance or ordinances required by any member, shall be invited to perform them; or, if it be thought more expedient, each church may appoint, or ordain, one of their own members to administer the ordinances in such way as to each church may seem proper."

There was also the following section on —

"*The Instruction of Children:* — We believe it to be the duty of all parents to instruct their children in the principles of the gospel, as the best means to inspire them with the love of virtue, and to promote in them good manners, and habits of industry and sobriety. As a necessary introduction to the knowledge of the gospel, we recommend the institution of a school, or schools, to be under the direction of every church; in which shall be taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and psalmody. We recommend, further, that provision be made for instructing poor children, in the said schools, *gratis*. As the fullest discovery of the perfections and will of God, and of the whole duty of man, is contained in the Bible, we wish that divine book to be read by the youth of our churches as early and frequently as possible; and that they should be instructed therein at stated meetings appointed for that purpose."

"'*The communion of the churches*' was to be accomplished by a 'convention of the churches held annually by deputies or messengers, to inquire into, and report, the state of each church, respecting the admission of members, and the progress of the gospel; . . . and to send forth ministers to propagate the gospel in places where it had not been regularly preached, and thereby to form and establish new churches.'

"All the general acts of the convention which relate to the interest of particular churches, shall be issued only by way of advice or recommendation."

Chapter III. was called "Recommendations," and contained five sections, on the following subjects: "War, Going to Law, Holding Slaves, Oaths, Submission to Government." The one of greatest historical interest, as showing their opposition to human bondage, was —

"*Of Holding Slaves:* — We believe it to be inconsistent with the union of the human race in a common Saviour, and the obligations to mutual and universal love which flow from that union, to hold any part of our fellow-creatures in bondage. We therefore recommend a total refraining from the African trade, and the adoption of prudent measures for the gradual abolition of the slavery of the negroes in our country, and for the instruction and education of their children, in English literature, and in the principles of the gospel."

The pamphlet closes with a circular letter, addressed "To the Elders and Brethren in the same Belief throughout the United States of America." It said of the "Articles of Faith and Plan of Church Government": —

"The Articles are few, but they contain the essentials of the gospel. We thought it improper to require an assent to opinions that are merely speculative, or to introduce *words,* in expressing the articles of our belief, which have been the cause of unchristian controversies. The plan of church government is nearly that of the Congregational Church. We conceive it to be most friendly to Christian liberty, and most agreeable to the word of God."

It will be noticed that, in this "Form of Church Government," the Convention made no rules for itself, but only for the churches of which it might be composed. Its own laws were simply "Rules of Order," variously modified at each session as circumstances required.

That the conclusions embodied in these articles and plans for the churches, were not hastily reached, nor without the giving up of some strong personal preferences, for the sake of unity of effort, may be presumed from what we know of the length of the session, and of the composition of the Convention. The Rellyans were in the minority, and yet much of the phraseology of these Articles, Plan, and Recommendations, is decidedly Rellyan. This is particularly noticeable in the section relating to the ordinances, and in the recommendation in regard to slavery. John Murray and the Gloucester Universalists were opposed to water baptism. This they had distinctly avowed in their controversy with the First Parish, and had testified at the trials to recover the tax money: "We distinguish ourselves from the church under the instruction of Mr. Forbes, by our not using baptism as an external rite."[1] Rev. David Evans, Thomas Fitzgerald, and perhaps one other delegate from the Philadelphia Church, were, with Mr. Murray, the only representatives of that opinion in the Convention. All the others were converts from the Baptists, retaining all their former views, except with reference to the extent and efficacy of the atonement. The charity and liberality of such a majority challenges our admiration.

[1] Appeal to the Impartial Public, p. 13.

The composition of the Articles of Faith, Plan, and Recommendations, was, no doubt, entrusted to a committee, and they were then referred to Dr. Benjamin Rush for revision and arrangement. Our authority for this latter statement is his own declaration, recorded in a volume of manuscripts entitled "Letters and Thoughts," now preserved in the Ridgway branch of the Philadelphia Library. In it he makes this entry: "1790, June 5. This morning I delivered to the Convention of the Universal Church in the Lodge (their church) a copy of their Articles and Plan of Government, which, at their request, I corrected and arranged for them for the meeting. I saw, and was introduced to, the Rev. Mr. John Murray." Dr. Rush was a Winchesterian Universalist, and, as will be seen farther on, had long cherished a feeling of dislike to Mr. Murray. He adds: "Saw him and his wife on the 6th. In our conversation he remarked that, in reforming mankind, the influence of the following description of people was necessary, and in the order they are arranged: 1. Women; 2. Schoolmasters; 3. Ministers; 4. Magistrates. He told me that when he went to Boston, twenty years ago, there was not one Universalist in that town. Now they had a church there."

The Articles of Faith, although couched in language that may seem to be designedly ambiguous, making allowance for a large diversity of opinion to be entertained by those who should accept them as a common platform, were no doubt intended as a statement of the Trinitarianism of the Convention. This is evident from the subsequent action of the Philadelphia church, organized by the union of the Murrayites and Winchesterians,

in July, 1790, which at once accepted the Articles, in ruling out the application of an avowed Unitarian for membership, on the ground that their creed would not allow them to accept him. The Philadelphia church, writing to George Richards, March 14, 1792, said: —

"No doubt Brother Gordon mentioned to you a Mr. Palmer who was preaching with us when he left this city for Boston. This young man offered himself to become a member of our church, but before the time for admitting him his sentiments were suspected of being Socinian, if not Deistical. He was accordingly examined, and confessed that he did believe Jesus to be the natural son of Joseph and Mary, begotten by ordinary generation. This made his membership with us inadmissible at that time. He still continues the same, and hath withdrawn from us, and hath gotten other places to preach in, where he can preach that sentiment freely, and that to crowded audiences."

The person thus referred to was Elihu Palmer, a native of Canterbury, Conn., born in 1764. He has been called a deist, and probably was so later in life; but in 1792 his disbelief in the doctrine of the Trinity would have been likely to have gained him the reputation of being a deist, even if he had professed unwavering faith in revealed religion. Denied the fellowship of the Universalists, Mr. Palmer, with a few followers, obtained a room in Church Alley, and commenced preaching there in March, 1791. Somewhere in 1788 or 1789, John Fitch, the inventor of the steamboat, and Henry Voight, his associate in that enterprise, who were avowed deists, believing, as they claimed, only in "the God of Nature," discovered from conversation with

others that there were a sufficient number of persons in Philadelphia in sympathy with their views to justify an attempt at an organization. It was not, however, till February, 1790, that they succeeded in perfecting their plans, and organized what they called "The Universal Society." In order to separate themselves and their society as much as possible from all Christian influences, it was resolved among the members to cease the use of Anno Domini, and to date their era from the establishment of "The Universal Society."

The announcement that Mr. Palmer was to preach on the date above mentioned, and the circumstances under which his meeting was held, attracted much attention throughout Philadelphia; and "The Universal Society," which at that time numbered forty members, especially interested themselves to give the persecuted man, as they styled him, all the aid in their power, and, if possible, win him over to themselves. The room where the meeting was held was therefore crowded, — "The Universal Society," it may be supposed, being present in full strength. Mr. Palmer preached from Micah vi. 8: "Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God." In the sermon he combated the dogma of the deity of Christ; and the success of the effort was such that notice was given that on the succeeding Sunday he would preach again. This announcement, with the attendant circumstances, excited much feeling, remonstrance, and heated opposition on the part of the leading Christian people in the city. Bishop White was prominent in the crusade against the movement; and although the owner of the room in which the meetings were being held was a member of "The Universal Society" he could not

resist the pressure brought against him, but closed his doors against the people on the day fixed for the second sermon. "The Universal Society" soon ceased to exist.[1]

Mr. Palmer then went to New York for a while, and afterwards returning to Philadelphia, was attacked by the yellow fever in 1793, and became totally blind. He again removed to New York, where he became the head of the "Columbian Illuminati," established in 1801. He died in Philadelphia in 1806.

These facts with regard to Elihu Palmer have been narrated chiefly because Dr. Francis, in his "Old New York" (p. 91) speaks of the beginning of the Universalist movement in New York city as being inaugurated by Edward Mitchell and William Palmer, who "drew together a most respectable body of believers;" and then goes on to say that Palmer commenced his work in New York, but "proceeded to Philadelphia for the purpose of the study and practice of the law, took the yellow fever of 1793, became totally blind, and gave up his law pursuits. Returned to New York, and resumed preaching in 1796; and died in Philadelphia, of pleurisy, in the winter of 1805 or 1806."

The similarity of these circumstances of sickness, blindness, and time and place of death, indicate that Elihu and William Palmer were the same person; but the fact of association with Edward Mitchell, an intensely prejudiced Trinitarian, in building up Universalism in New York, is ground for positive conviction that either Dr. Francis has made a mistake in his narrative, or

[1] History of Philadelphia, by Thompson Westcott, chap. cccIxxxii., in the Philadelphia Sunday Dispatch, May 9, 1854.

that Palmer ceased to be a Unitarian. Mr. Mitchell's narrative of his work in New York, yet to be given in these pages, makes no mention of Mr. Palmer. Rev. Nathaniel Stacy, in his "Memoirs" (p. 105), says that Rev. John Murray was in attendance at the New England convention in 1804, at Sturbridge, Mass., and that "he came in company with a man from the city of New York by the name of Palmer, who also delivered one discourse."

The Trinitarian intent of the Articles of Faith is further evident from the action of some of the churches in fellowship with the convention, as will be more fully presented hereafter, in adopting, as supplemental to these articles, others which explicitly set forth, explain, and defend Unitarian views. On the other hand, it must be said that the Trinitarian doctrine was so mildly stated that the Articles of Faith were objected to in another quarter, as being a virtual denial of the Deity of Christ. Thus, Mr. Murray writes to a Philadelphia friend from Boston in 1791: —

"We have met with some difficulty in forming our church in this place from a good old friend, who, thinking the language of convention not sufficiently clear and strong in establishing the doctrine of the divinity [deity] of our Saviour, wished to make some amendments in the articles of faith before he could sign them. I could not give my consent to any alteration, inasmuch as the language was Scriptural, and, I conceived, sufficiently clear and full to the purpose, and that to alter the articles, I feared, would be construed as a tacit declaration that we supposed the members of that convention not sound in the faith. Mr. Richards heartily joined with me, so that after many evenings' debate, only one joined with our old friend, and upwards of forty male members adopted

the articles of convention as the articles of their faith, — not as the articles of convention, but as the oracles of God. We are now in a fair way of going on, though in order to make peace we must let this good old friend do something by way of addition, and then we shall go on, I trust, peaceably, and therefore prosperously."

Mr. Murray called himself a Trinitarian, and on one occasion speaks of the "triune God," as in vol. ii. p. 370, of his published "Letters": —

"It is true that every part of the works of God are mysterious, and that none by searching can find out God, but as far as I can comprehend myself, I can catch a glimpse of the grace exhibited by this triune Being, consisting of body, soul, and spirit, made in the *image of God*, of the triune God."

This is a comparison, however, which is sheer folly on the Athanasian or Nicene definition of the Trinity; and Mr. Murray's idea of the supreme deity of Christ alone, who is Father, Word, or Holy Ghost, according to manifestation, was pure Sabellianism; and as generally put forth by him, was identical with the views of Swedenborg on this subject. Generally he was very severe in his estimate and treatment of those who entertained Socinian ideas, but at times he was more charitable. This was noticeably the case in his advice to the Philadelphians in regard to the manner in which Mr. Palmer ought to be treated by them. "I suppose," he wrote to his most intimate friend in that city in regard to Mr. Palmer, "he will please some; but if he is anything tolerable don't find fault. I admire your conduct hitherto; remember we never catch birds by throwing stones at them."

We have alluded to the fact that the majority of the members of the convention were converts from the Baptists. In the record of events between 1780 and 1790, in Benedict's "General History of the Baptist Denomination" (vol. i. p. 275), is the following: —

"During this period a number of ministers, and with them a considerable number of brethren, fell in with Elhanan Winchester's notion of universal restoration. The rage for this doctrine prevailed for a time to a considerable extent."

In the "History of the Philadelphia Baptist Association," by Rev. H. G. Jones, published in "The World" of 1832–33, occurs the following: —

"The year 1790 presents no joyful aspect. Clouds and storms, tornadoes and volcanic eruptions, echoed and re-echoed from Dan to Beersheba. The doctrine of 'a general provision,' like an unexpected pestilence, or as the insidious, fatal samoul of Africa, came among some of the churches. Whether it was indigenous or exotic, the archives of the day do not inform us. This we know, it led on to Universalism, a depôt to which it as naturally tends as a weight in motion on an inclined plane rushes on to the lowest point of destination. Cape May and Pittsgrove churches were so nearly ruined by 'a general atonement,' which ended in Universalism, that scarcely anything could be seen in their borders but their tears, and scarcely anything could be heard but their sighs and groans. And to add to the calamity, Nicholas Cox, a preacher at Kingwood, now grown wiser than his fathers, mounted on the fractious steed of 'general provision,' and rode furiously on to the barren, hopeless, desolate plains of Universalism."

Of Revs. Nicholas Cox and William Worth, the

following information is given in Rev. Abel C. Thomas' "Century of Universalism" (pp. 40–45): —

"Rev. Nicholas Cox was born in Philadelphia in 1742, but of what lineage we know not. He became a Baptist in New Jersey, where he ministered to good acceptance with several societies for a number of years. Kingwood, Wantage, and other places in Warren and Sussex Counties, have been mentioned as the scenes of his residence and labors; but of one thing we may inferentially be sure: he was highly regarded among the Baptists as one of their best and talented men, else the author of the foregoing tirade would not have so deeply mourned his conversion to Universalism. At the sacrifice of ease, and of social consideration, he openly avowed the sublime conviction of head and heart, and continued steadfast and rejoicing to the end.

"He spent the larger part of his life, as a preacher, in the counties above mentioned, and his name, it may be seen, frequently occurs in the minutes of the Philadelphia Convention. He was at the first session in 1790, and at nine sessions besides, of the series. Although he received invitations to settle, he never became a pastor among the Universalists, but preached as a self-appointed missionary, — rather, I should say, a divinely-ordained evangelist.

"In 1808, while in Maryland, he received a challenge, from a Presbyterian clergyman, to hold a public discussion. Such was the defeat of the opponent of Universalism, that the audience begged him to quit the field, and not venture another challenge.

"He spent the summers of 1809 and 1810 in Virginia, where he defined a circuit for himself, and zealously published the good tidings of a world redeemed. It is the uniform testimony of tradition that he was a close reasoner, a good neighbor, and an honest man. He con-

tinued to preach till within three or four years of his death, which occurred in Mansfield, Warren County, N. J., March 20, 1826, aged eighty-four.

"So general was the expectation that he would relinquish his faith, in the dying hour, that even his son was anxious in regard to the result. He therefore took upon himself to attend personally upon his father, during the last illness of the old Universalist. There was much conversation between them, but not a doubt was exhibited by the dying saint; and to the frequent inquiries of his son, he uniformly answered in the fulness of heavenly trust.

"Rev. William Worth was Moderator of the Convention of 1790. In the 'History of New Jersey,' I find that 'a Baptist Church was founded in Pittsgrove about 1743.' The historian, after naming several pastors, adds this: —

"'Rev. William Worth then took the charge, and the congregation increased considerably under his ministration, until he became deeply engaged in land speculation in the back country; and the opinion becoming current that he had become tinctured with Universalism, the congregation dwindled away almost to nothing.'

"There is no imputation of wrong in the business transactions referred to, and I suspect that the falling away of the congregation was rather due to the hostility of the church dignitaries in Philadelphia, than to the intelligent free-will of the people in Pittsgrove — a view which seems to be confirmed by a pamphlet, the title of which is in the margin.[1] The first paragraph is as follows: —

"'There lately appeared, in the minutes of the Baptist

[1] "Mr. Worth's Appeal to the Public, in Answer to a late Publication against him by the Baptist Association at Philadelphia, wherein his Sentiments, as Believing the Universal Love of God in the Restoration of all the Human Race, are Briefly Stated." Imprint, Philadelphia, 1790, pp. 30.

Association, an advertisement cautioning the churches of that denomination to beware of me, as also of the Rev. Mr. Seagrave. Their words are: — "As we had reason to fear, at the last Association, that Mr. Worth, of Pittsgrove, was far gone in the doctrine of Universal Salvation, we are well certified, by undoubted authority, that he is now fully in that belief. We, therefore, to show our abhorrence of that doctrine, and of his disingenuous conduct for a long time past, caution our churches to beware of him, and of Artis Seagrave, of the same place, also, who has espoused the same doctrine."'

"From the clear and candid review by Mr. Worth, I make the following extracts: —

"'If my brethren in the ministry had reason to fear that I was imbibing wrong notions a year ago, as they say they had, in the above-recited minute, why did they not endeavor to reclaim me? Why did they not at least endeavor to point out to me the evil of my sentiments, and wherein they were inconsistent with the word of God? This, however, they have never attempted. Paul exhorted Titus, "after the first and second admonition, to reject a heretic;" but I am rejected without any. In a civil court, no man can be condemned without a fair trial, and being heard in his own defence. My brethren, however, did not allow me that liberty, but condemned me without a trial, or even so much as giving me notice of it.'

"Dr. Jones, it seems, had sent a letter to the church in Pittsgrove, by request of the Association, in which he said some hard things, no less of Mr. Worth than of Universalism, warning the people to be on their guard. 'As your number is already small, it will be a pity there should be a division, as there was in Philadelphia;' referring, without doubt, to the schism under Elhanan Winchester in 1781. 'The Doctor then insinuates that I had acted under covert, and disingenuously,' which is answered as follows: 'This charge is both

ungenerous and false, and, where I am known, can do me no harm. Their only support of the charge is, that if these were my sentiments, why did not I confess it? To which I reply: 1st. It is impossible for any honest man to confess sentiments before he believes them. 2d. It would be foolish in any man to do it before he had examined them in all their parts, so as to be able to defend them, and especially in a public character. 3d. As their sentiments were no bar of fellowship with me, I was unwilling to give them any offence with mine. 4th. He that has the oversight of Christ's flock ought to have judgment to feed them, and rightly to divide the word of truth among them. Paul tells the Corinthians that "hitherto he has fed them with milk, and not with strong meat, for as yet they were not able to bear it;" and he complains of the Hebrews, that "it was time for them to be teachers of others, and yet needed to be taught the first principles of religion, and had become such as needed milk, and not strong meat." Lastly, it is a fact. I never did deny it; but always referred those who asked me the question, to my public preaching, declaring, as I now do, in the presence of my Judge, that I did preach my sentiments, without disguise, and that, if what I preached was Universal doctrine, it was my sentiments.'

"Very gladly would I transcribe every paragraph of this admirable pamphlet for republication, but will close with the following comprehensive note: —

"'From our several authors who have professedly written on the subject (which Dr. Jones had frequent opportunities of reading), it doth evidently appear that we verily believe: That Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life; and that there is no coming to the Father but in and through him: That a real belief of this most precious truth is essential to our happiness; for though we are ever safe in the truth, yet we never can be truly

happy until we are brought in reality to believe it: That our safety in the truth is an infallible security that we shall be brought to a happiness in believing: That the belief of this truth doth necessarily inspire all the subjects of it to love the brotherhood, to fear God, and to honor the king, or civil government. How could the Doctor, then, lay his hand on his heart, and say that this doctrine, which we believe, and joyfully preach for the good of mankind, is licentious, and subversive of all government, human and divine?'

"There is so much sweetness, dignity, and solidity in all this, and all that follows in this pamphlet of thirty pages, that I reluctantly refrain from further extracts, and am only sorry that I have not been able to gather farther information concerning the author."

Mr. Murray remained in Philadelphia more than a month after the close of the Convention. Writing to her parents, from that city, June 19, Mrs. Murray says: —

"The sentiments of the Universalists are growing every day more respectable in this city. The family of Dr. Franklin are among the foremost of our favorers. Mrs. Bache, the doctor's daughter, says it was her father's opinion, that no system in the Christian world was so effectually calculated to promote the interests of society, as that doctrine which shows a God reconciling a lapsed world unto himself. The Philadelphians are exceedingly anxious to fix Mr. Murray among them. At first a genteel house, rent free for life, with a salary of £200 a year, was proposed to him. They now propose £250; and finally they add, if he will pledge his word to return to them as soon as he can adjust his affairs at the eastward, they will ensure him, exclusive of his house-rent, a yearly income of £400 [or $1,066.67]. The church belonging to the Universalists in this metropolis, not

being spacious enough to contain the number who flock to hear him, application was made to the Rev. Dr. Smith, Provost, or President of the College or Academy, for the use of a building belonging to it, and known by the name of the College Hall. A special meeting of the trustees was, upon this occasion, called, and unanimous consent obtained. Dr. Smith sent a message, requesting Mr. Murray's attendance at his house. Mr. M——, you will not doubt, obeyed the summons, when he was escorted to the hall by the President and Professors, who waited upon him to the pulpit stairs, and then took their seats in the assembly. Mr. M——, after delivering a discourse, did not immediately appoint a future lecture. The President addressed him: 'Sir, I expected you would have published other opportunities; for you must know, that the use of the hall is yours, when, and as frequently, as you please.' And, accordingly, in the course of the week, large and respectable audiences are collected there. Besides the President, Messrs. Magaw, Rogers, Bond, Macdual, and Andrews, regularly attend, and Mr. M—— receives from them the utmost politeness. . . . On Sunday, Mr. M—— is at the Lodge, the Church of the Universalists. The Rev. Dr. Blair[1] is a confirmed convert to Universalism. Relly is his oracle; though I was informed, by Dr. Rush, that he has in many respects gone beyond, reconciling difficulties which Relly had not attempted. Dr. Rush is a man of sense and letters, and is well known in the medical and literary world. I am happy that I can name Dr. Rush as an open, avowed professor of, and ornament to, the religion of Jesus. Addressing Mr. M——, this morning, with much candor he thus expressed himself: 'Why, my dear sir, you have stood much alone; how have you buffeted the storm?

[1] Probably Dr. Samuel Blair, of Germantown, formerly pastor of the Old South, in Boston.

What a torrent of prejudice, tradition, malevolence, and calumny you have had to encounter! Twenty years ago I heard your name. You were preaching in Bachelor's Hall. No consideration would have induced me to have come within a mile of the place; and had I met you in the street, I should not have conceived it could have been you, except I had found you with the cloven foot, and with horns. But now how peaceful to myself is the revolution. The Bible is a consistent book, and everything that is excellent it contains.'"

The invitation to Philadelphia must have been highly flattering to Mr. Murray, and the compensation offered was exceedingly tempting, being equal to, if not in excess of, the salary received by any minister in the country. It was more than five times the amount which he was receiving in New England. Writing from Gloucester, in April, 1790, he said: "I have five dollars per week in Boston, and three in this place."

Dr. Benjamin Rush, whose conversation Mrs. Murray records, was, it seems hardly necessary to say, one of the most eminent men of his time. Born of Calvinistic parents at Bristol, Penn., in 1745, he was zealously taught the tenets of the Genevan theology. Educated at Princeton College, he studied medicine in Philadelphia, Edinburgh, London, and Paris; and in 1769 was elected Professor of Chemistry in the Philadelphia College; in 1789 he succeeded to the chair of the theory and practice of medicine in the same institution. In 1791 he was elected Professor of the Institutes of Medicine and Clinical Practice in the University of Pennsylvania; and in 1796 he was also promoted to the chair of the practice of physic, a position which he held till his death, in 1813. His medical works are printed in five

octavo volumes, under the modest title of "Medical Inquiries and Observations," with a sixth volume of "Introductory Lectures." He was also the author of a volume of "Miscellaneous Essays," of a "History of the Yellow Fever, as it appeared in Philadelphia from 1793 to 1797;" and in all of fifty-eight works on various subjects.

As a patriot, the services of Dr. Rush were equally conspicuous. In the struggle for independence his voice and pen were untiringly employed in the cause of his country. He was a member of the illustrious Congress which issued the Declaration of Independence, and his name is enrolled among its honored signers. He was appointed in 1777 Surgeon-General of the Army for the Middle Department, and subsequently Physician-General of the military hospitals. At once he prepared "Directions for Preserving the Health of Soldiers," which was "published in 1777, by order of the Board of War, for the American Army engaged in the War of the Revolution." Under the head of "Diet," he has the following: —

"What shall I say to the custom of drinking spirituous liquors, which prevails so generally in our army? I am aware of the prejudices in favor of it. It requires an arm more powerful than mine — the arm of a Hercules — to encounter them. The common apology for the use of rum in our army is, that it is necessary to guard against the effects of heat and cold. But I maintain that in no case whatever does rum abate the effects of either upon the constitution. On the contrary, I believe it always increases them. The temporary elevation of spirits in summer, and the temporary generation of warmth in winter, produced by rum, always leaves the body languid, and more liable to be affected by heat and cold after-

wards. Happy would it be for our soldiers if the evils ended here. The use of rum, by gradually wearing away the powers of the system, lays the foundation of fevers, fluxes, jaundice, and most of the diseases which occur in military hospitals. It is a vulgar error to suppose that the fatigue arising from violent exercise or hard labor is relieved by the use of spirituous liquors. The principles of animal life are the same in a horse as in a man, and the horses, we find, undergo the severest labor with no other liquor than cool water. There are many instances where even reapers have been forced to acknowledge that plentiful draughts of milk and water have enabled them to go through the fatigues of harvest with more pleasure and fewer inconveniences to their health, than ever they experienced from the use of a mixture of rum and water.

"Spirituous liquors were unknown to the armies of ancient Rome. The canteen of every soldier was filled with nothing but vinegar; and it was by frequently drinking a small quantity of this wholesome liquor mixed with water that the Roman soldiers were enabled to sustain tedious marches through scorching sands without being subject to sickness of any kind. The vinegar effectually resists that tendency to putrefaction to which heat and labor dispose the fluids. It moreover calms the inordinate action of the solids which is created by hard duty. It would be foreign to my purpose, or I might show that the abstraction of rum from our soldiers would contribute greatly to promote discipline and a faithful discharge of duty among them."

A volume of "Temperance Sermons," published anonymously in Philadelphia, in 1790, but generally attributed to Dr. Rush, so roused the medical faculty of the city, that the "College of Physicians" memorialized Congress on the subject of intemperance, and entreated

that body, "by their obligations to protect the lives of their constituents, and by their regard to the character of our nation and to the rank of our species in the scale of beings, to impose such heavy duties upon distilled spirits as shall be effectual to restrain their intemperate use in our country." In 1794 Dr. Rush published his "Medical Inquiries into the Effects of Ardent Spirits upon the Body and Mind," taking thus early a position on this subject to which investigation causes all thoughtful men to come, — that total abstinence is the only ground on which intemperance can be successfully combated. Indeed, as early as 1788, in an "Address to the Ministers of the Gospel of every Denomination in the United States upon Subjects interesting to Morals," he said: —

"I shall begin by pointing out, in the first place, the mischievous effects of spirituous liquors upon the morals of our citizens.

"They render the temper peevish and passionate. They beget quarrels, and lead to profane and indecent language. They are the parents of idleness and extravagance, and the certain forerunners of poverty, and frequently of jails, wheelbarrows, and the gallows. They are likewise injurious to health and life, and kill more than the pestilence or the sword. Our legislatures, by permitting the use of them for the sake of the paltry duty collected from them, act as absurdly as a prince would do, who should permit the cultivation of a poisonous nut which every year carried off ten thousand of his subjects, because it yielded a revenue of thirty thousand pounds a year. These ten thousand men would produce annually by their labor, or by paying a trifling impost upon any one of the necessaries of life, twenty times

that sum. In order to put an end to the desolating effects of spirituous liquors, it will be proper for our ministers to preach against, not the abuse of them only, but their use altogether. They are never necessary but in sickness, and then they are better applied to the outside than to the inside of the body." [1]

The same year, according to the historian of the Philadelphia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Dr. Rush appeared before that body,

"and made an earnest and animated address on the use of ardent spirits, taking the broad ground then so strongly occupied by the conference, and since so signally taken and maintained by the temperance reformation, — '*that total abstinence is no less the demand of our nature than it is the rule of our safety;*' and he besought the conference to use its influence to stop the use as well as the abuse of spirit-drinking." [2]

In 1811 Dr. Rush appeared before the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, then in session in Philadelphia, and, presenting that body of ministers and elders with a thousand copies of his "Enquiries," urged them to take some steps to stay the ravages of intemperance. Whereupon the General Assembly "appointed committees to take into consideration the evil, and suggest a remedy." Similar committees were subsequently appointed by the General Associations of Connecticut and Massachusetts, to "co-operate with those of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church." During 1811 and 1812 these committees held several joint meetings, at which they considered various measures for

[1] Miscellaneous Essays, p. 115.

[2] Rev. George W. Lybaand, quoted in the report of the Pennsylvania State Temperance Union, 1871, p. 393.

the suppression of intemperance. They finally decided on the organization of temperance societies, and a form of constitution having been agreed upon, they called a public meeting in Boston, Feb. 5, 1813, at which time the "Massachusetts Society for the Suppression of Intemperance" was organized. Thus, to Dr. Rush we are able to trace the temperance reform as an organized movement. So careful and accurate a student of the subject as James Black, Esq., of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, than whom no man living is better acquainted with the history of the temperance effort, says that

"Dr. Benjamin Rush, of the city of Philadelphia, was unquestionably the father of the present temperance reform."[1]

Dr. Rush was also a zealous advocate of public schools, writing and publishing several essays in their behalf. In 1791 he published "A Defence of the Bible as a School Book."[2] He was a firm believer in the authority of the Scriptures, making frequent and eloquent avowals of his convictions, and this at a time when infidelity was common with many men of high standing.

He also took advanced ground in the reform of the penal code. A law had been enacted in Pennsylvania which inflicted hard labor in public for certain offences which, under the old system, were punished with death. The culprits were chained to wheelbarrows, their heads shaved, and their bodies arrayed in a dress of peculiar cut and color. In "An Enquiry into the Effects of Public Punishments upon Criminals and upon Society," read in the Society for Promoting Political Enquiries,

[1] Report of the Pennsylvania State Temperance Union, 1871, p. 392.

[2] Miscellaneous Essays, pp. 93–113.

convened at the house of Benjamin Franklin, Esq., in Philadelphia, March 9, 1787, Dr. Rush exposed the errors and mischiefs of the new law, and pleaded that punishments be made private, and that they be accompanied with humane treatment and religious instruction. His effort was met with sarcasm and ridicule, and was treated as the production of a humane heart, but of a wild and visionary imagination. But the workings of the law convinced the people of his sagacity in foreseeing its results, and in three years from its enactment it was repealed.

A few years later, Dr. Rush published "An Enquiry into the Consistency of the Punishment of Murder by Death with Reason and Revelation."[1] In this he took the position that government has no right to punish even deliberate murder with death. Rev. Mr. Annan, who had published an attack on Universalism, reviewed Dr. Rush's effort, and a general interest was awakened on the subject, resulting, in 1793, in the publication by the Attorney-General of Pennsylvania of "An Inquiry how far the Punishment of Death is necessary in that State," in which he presented the same arguments laid down by Dr. Rush.

At what time Dr. Rush became a Universalist we cannot say, but he was a believer as early as April, 1781, being at that time a warm friend and supporter of Rev. Elhanan Winchester, with whose peculiar views he was in hearty sympathy. When Mr. Winchester went to England, in 1787, being chiefly encouraged thereto by Dr. Rush, who believed that a great field was there open for him, he furnished him with letters of cor-

[1] Miscellaneous Essays, pp. 164–182.

dial commendation to Dr. Price and other distinguished gentlemen in London, and kept up an intimate correspondence with him during his absence. In one of his letters, Dr. Rush writes: —

"The Universalist doctrine prevails more and more in our country, particularly among persons eminent for their piety, in whom it is not a mere speculation, but a new principle of action in the heart, prompting to practical godliness."

Again, he says: —

"I contemplate with you the progress of reason and liberty in Europe with great pleasure. Republican forms of government are the best repositories of the gospel. I therefore suppose they are intended as preludes to a glorious manifestation of its power and influence upon the hearts of men. The language of these free and equal governments seems to be like that of John the Baptist of old: 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.' The benevolent spirit which has lately appeared in the world in its governments, in its numerous philanthropic and humane societies, and even in public entertainments, remind me of the first efforts of a child to move its body or limbs. These efforts are strong, but irregular, and often in a contrary direction to that which is intended. Time and a few unsuccessful experiments soon bring these motions into a proper direction. The same will happen, I have no doubt, to the present kind, but irregular and convulsive impulses of the human heart. At present, they lead men to admire and celebrate human lights and human deliverers; but ere long, public admiration and praise will rise to Him who is the true light of the world, and who alone delivers from evils of *every kind*. At present, we wish 'liberty to the whole world.' But the next touch of the celestial magnet upon the

human heart will direct it into wishes for the *salvation of all mankind.*" [1]

This prophetic utterance, made at a time when Universalism was understood and embraced by a very few, must be acknowledged by us who stand with a hundred years of national and religious history at our back, as an indication of wonderful foresight, a mind trained to accurate philosophic thought, and a soul which staggered at no obstacle.

When the suggestion was made to hold a Convention of the Universalists in Philadelphia, Dr. Rush was solicitous that the call for the Convention should be addressed to all Christian people in the country, as he believed that a common platform could be framed, on which all could unite. He was overruled in this, and the Convention was distinctively Universalist. The probability is that his professional duties prevented his giving much time and attention to the business sessions; but his attitude towards the cause is unmistakably set forth in Mrs. Murray's letter; as also in the fact of his revising and arranging the report of the committee on Articles of Faith, and Plan of Government.

There is still to be found among the papers of Dr. Rush, a letter from Mr. Murray, addressed to Israel Israel, one of the committee on the circular letter with reference to calling the Convention, which seems to be in part an answer to a letter accompanying that document, and suggesting the practicability of inviting to the proposed Convention representatives from churches not professing Universalist views. The prob-

[1] Stone's Life of Winchester, pp. 187, 197, 198.

ability is, from the fact that this letter was passed over to Dr. Rush, and retained by him, that the catholicity of the movement was his suggestion. The letter is as follows: —

"Gloucester, Nov. 3, 1789.

"My Dear Friend, — The packet inclosing the circular letter was put into my hand between meetings yesterday. I sit me down this morning to reply, as requested in the letter inclosing the two copies of the circular letter, signed by our mutual friends who form the committee.

"Your desire is, and my desire would be, to fall on some measure to have a universal church, constituted on such general and generous principles as to take in all who profess salvation in Christ Jesus, and maintain good works. But say, my valued friends, who amongst the mere professors of Christianity do not make this profession? Where is the church, denominated Christian, that does not profess salvation in Christ Jesus, and maintain good works? And which of all these churches making this profession would be taken in by you — by us? I well know that the disciples of the meek and lowly Prince of Peace are willing to join with the blood-bought throng to celebrate his praise, and glorify his name by a life of obedience, and, as much as is in their power, to follow peace with all men; but, notwithstanding the Christian churches of all denominations profess to have salvation in Christ Jesus, and pray, with apparent devotion, that all mankind may have the same salvation there, yet, you are not now to be informed, they will all unite in reprobating those who believe their prayers will be answered.

"No, my friends, you will never be able to form a union with any of the Christian churches while you really believe what they sometimes profess to believe.

While you believe the ministry of reconciliation, every denomination of professed Christians will be your irreconcilable enemies. These are my thoughts of the matter, and as long as you worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, so long you will be considered by all denominations, — from the great Church of Rome, down to the smallest and latest-formed branch of Dissenters, — as heretics; and in the way that they all call heresy, you must be content to worship the God of your fathers.

"We are too apt to make mistakes in consequence of passing all under one general name. Alas! what are names! Our Lord, his disciples, and the members of the synagogue, all passed under the same general name of Jews, and all met in the same synagogue; and much did the disciples labor to effect what your benevolent hearts seem set upon; but they could not obtain it; their brethren drove them away, and they were therefore obliged to go unto the Gentiles. 'Think you,' said our Saviour, 'I am come to send peace on the earth?' No! no! no! 'In the world,' said the same Saviour, 'you shall have tribulation. They hated me and they shall hate you.' If we wish to establish peace with the world, or with any of the Christian churches in the world, we must be of the world; they will love their own, and only love their own.

"When the meeting [house] was built in this town, we publicly declared it open to all who professed to have salvation in Christ Jesus. Not one of the clergy would ever go into it. There were one or two whose sentiments we thought liberal, and we invited them, [thinking] they would accept the invitation; but they were afraid. Arians, Socinians, Arminians, will hold fellowship and communion together, but none of them will have anything to do with us.

"I give it, then, as my fixed and settled opinion, that

we never shall be able to form a friendly union with any one denomination of Christian professors; and that, if ever we have any churches formed, they must be made up of the outcast of the people, and the Christian world now, as the Jewish world formerly, will esteem us the accursed of the Lord.

"I have, however, laid the matter before my friends in this place. I will do the same in Boston. The result of their deliberations I will transmit as soon as possible; and though I never expect any great share of agreement or affection from any other churches, yet it will give me inexpressible pleasure to find the word of [our] Saviour so far prevail, as that many may associate together in the faith of Jesus, and in the bonds of union, and by a close adherence to some plain, Christian rules, build up each other in this most holy faith.

"Thus far I have written, and perhaps never met the ideas of my corresponding friends; my present friend thinks not, and she is generally right; however, you have my opinion so far, whether you desired [it] or not. I shall now proceed as freely to give you my opinion respecting the plainest part of your letter. There are many, in sundry parts of this and the neighboring States, who profess to believe the truth; but I do not find many who are valiant for the truth. I believe there are many who approve of the plan you propose, and would have no objection to see churches formed on your plan in every part of the continent; but I will venture to give it as my opinion, that you will not find in the New England States a person who will leave home at his own charge, or a society who will agree to pay the expenses of any who should consent to go as a delegate. In short, the professors of the faith we hold, care but little about how matters go on in this world; we are not now, as formerly, blown into a flame by the bellows of persecution; our enemies are wise enough to let us

alone, and I should not be surprised if we were to go out. It is, then, my opinion, [that] you will not be met or assisted by any individuals from these parts, or ever be able to effect your plan without the assistance of your enemies, — and how they will be able to assist in the present state of government, I do not see.

"Since I began this letter, I have had an answer from the society I preach to in this place. It corresponds with the opinion I hazarded before: they wish you success, but they are not able to go or send. I expect the same answer from Boston; and I know not who else to make application to, as I am much confined to these places.

"I confess my heart is fully with you; and were I now disengaged as formerly, I would set out and wholly devote myself to the business. I do not know that I should succeed, but I do know that I should try; and from my heart I am sorry that I did not set out, on my first coming into this country, on some such plan. However, perhaps after all, the way of man is not in himself, — perhaps it is not yet time. God has the hearts of all in his hand, and he can turn them whither he will. When, therefore, it is his pleasure such matters shall take place, they assuredly will. Here, then, we ought — here, then, we will leave it; let our Saviour do as seemeth good in his sight. . . .

"Mrs. Murray is still very unwell, but I encourage hope that she will be well enough by next May to set out with me to your city. In this hope I will conclude. Wishing you and yours every temporal and spiritual blessing, I am with true regard, my valued friends of the committee,

"Your faithful friend and devoted servant,

"John Murray."[1]

[1] Manuscripts of Dr. Benjamin Rush, vol. 22, p. 86, Ridgway Branch of Philadelphia Library. The MSS. have many valuable suggestions touching our early history.

Concerning Mr. Murray and Dr. Rush, we add two brief extracts from the volume of "Letters and Thoughts," already referred to: —

"June 9 [1790]. Met Mr. Murray in the street. He told me that he had heard from some of Dr. Watts' friends in London; that they had discovered among his papers, after his death, a defence of Universalism; but that they had burned it to prevent its injuring the credit of his other works. He remarked that many of his *hymns were Universal.*"

"June 15. Spent half an hour with Mr. Murray. He told me that he had read but little, except in his Bible, and that all his best thoughts occurred to him, without study, in the pulpit. He informed me, further, that he had once been a Methodist preacher under Rev. Mr. Wesley."

"Bachelor's Hall," mentioned by Dr. Rush, was a club-house, in the district of Kensington. It was a square building, of considerable beauty, and was chiefly used for balls and late suppers. It stood on the main river-street, with a fine open view of the Delaware. On the occasion of Mr. Murray's first visit to Philadelphia, some time in 1771, he relates [1] that the Baptist minister invited him to his house, and to his pulpit. He did not, however, occupy the pulpit, as his new friend, angry at being confounded by Mr. Murray in a private discussion, after renewing the invitation for him to preach to his people, closed the pulpit against him on the Sabbath he was to occupy it.

"Yet I had," says Mr. Murray, "among his connections a few friends, who, indignant at the treatment I had

[1] Memoir, p. 224.

received, redoubled their caresses. There was at this time a small company who assembled at a place known by the name of Bachelor's Hall. They were unacquainted with the truth I delivered; yet, willing to hear for themselves, they invited me to preach for them. Halting between two opinions, they solicited aid from a minister of another persuasion; and they requested me to hear him, to which I readily consented. The preacher selected his text: 'Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.' He commenced his comment: 'My friends, I shall undertake to prove that Jesus never did, nor never will, take away the sin of the world.' I was astonished, and the persons asking my attendance were abashed. The preacher added: 'It is impossible Christ can have taken away the sin of the world, for then all the world must be saved.' This was unquestionable. I was exceedingly gratified, and the more, as this sermon, intended for my confusion, did much to establish that truth of which, by the grace of God, I was a promulgator. The combined efforts of the clergy in Philadelphia barred against me the door of every house of public worship in the city. Bachelor's Hall was in Kensington. But at Bachelor's Hall the people attended, and a few were enabled to believe the good word of their God" (pp. 226, 227).

Watson, in his "Annals of Philadelphia" (vol. i. p. 432), alludes to the opposition to Murray in the city, by saying that Bachelor's Hall "was once lent to the use of Murray, the Universalist preacher, keeping then the doctrine cannon-shot distance from the city."

On the 17th of July, 1790, Mrs. Murray wrote to her parents: —

"This evening, a sermon has been delivered in College Hall, in opposition to the sentiments attributed to Mr.

Murray. The response thereto, which will be on Monday evening, will detain us a day longer in this city than we intended."

This opponent was Samuel Wetherill, a member of the Society of Friends. His sermon, and also some observations on Mr. Murray's reply, was published in a forty-eight-paged pamphlet, entitled "A Confutation of the Doctrines of Antinomianism," etc. The author avows that he does not attack the doctrine of Universalism, but that his purpose is to battle against the dogmas of imputed sin, imputed righteousness, and vicarious atonement. His arguments are ably stated, and the spirit and temper of his work are admirable.

Ritter's "Philadelphia Merchants" has the following notice of Mr. Wetherill: —

"The ancestry of Samuel Wetherill originated in England, and his immediate antecedents came to America, and settled in Jersey, even before the arrival of William Penn. Mr. Wetherill was originally a carpenter by trade, and as such came to Philadelphia before the Revolution. In process of time he changed his occupation from carpenter to that of weaver, and, 't is said, was the first weaver of jeans and fustians in America. He made the best of time and circumstances; and, being a 'Whig,' and decidedly in favor of the defensive war, made and sold materials for clothing the army, for which he was disowned by the regular Society of Friends; but, nothing daunted, and being a man of very proper Orthodox religious views, established at once another Friends' Meeting, which, furthered by the Legislature of Pennsylvania, by the donation and title of a lot at the southwest corner of Fifth and Arch streets, enabled him and others to establish their independence, and erect a building, where, also, they were known as 'Free Quakers,' and, by

some, as 'Fighting Quakers;' and here Samuel Wetherill was preacher until his demise."

He was born in Burlington, N. J., in April, 1736, and died in Philadelphia, Sept. 24, 1816.

On the 20th of July, Mr. Murray started homeward. Travelling slowly by private conveyance, and stopping to preach at several places in New Jersey, he arrived in New York on the 7th of August, where he remained several days, visiting friends, among whom were President Washington, and Vice-President Adams,—between whom and Mr. Murray there existed no merely formal friendship, as will be evident from Mrs. Murray's letters, published in the "Universalist Quarterly" for April, 1881, and April, 1882.

It would not be just, perhaps, to claim George Washington as a Universalist, — at least, not as a professed Universalist; but the following remark, attributed to him by Weems, in his "Life of Washington," may properly be cited as showing his Christian conviction and hope. Having witnessed the results of an Indian massacre of a mother and her children. Weems says that Washington used these words: —

"To see these poor innocents — these little, unoffending angels — just entering upon life, and instead of fondest sympathy and tenderness, meeting their hideous deaths — and from brothers, too! — filled my soul with the deepest horror of sin, but at the same time inspired a most abiding sense of that religion which announces the Redeemer, who shall one day do away man's malignant passions, and restore the children of God to primeval love and bliss. Without this hope, what man of feeling but would wish he had never been born" (pp. 49, 50).

During this visit, Mr. Murray delivered, in person, the "Address of the Convention" to the President: —

"Sir, — Permit us, in the name of the Society which we represent, to concur in the numerous congratulations which have been offered to you, since your accession to the government of the United States.

"For an account of our principles, we beg leave to refer you to the pamphlet, which we have now the honor of putting into your hands. In this publication, it will appear that the peculiar doctrine which we hold is not less friendly to the order and happiness of society, than it is essential to the perfection of the Deity. It is a singular circumstance in the history of this doctrine, that it has been preached and defended in every age since the first promulgation of the gospel; but we represent the first society, professing this doctrine, that have formed themselves into an independent church. Posterity will hardly fail to connect this memorable event with the auspicious years of PEACE, LIBERTY, and free inquiry in the United States, which distinguished the administration of GENERAL WASHINGTON.

"We join, thus publicly, with our affectionate fellow-citizens, in thanks to Almighty God, for the last of his numerous signal acts of goodness to our country, in preserving your valuable life in a late dangerous indisposition; and we assure you, Sir, that duty will not prompt us more than affection to pray that you may long continue the support and ornament of our country, and that you may hereafter fill a higher station, and enjoy the greater reward of being a king and priest to our God.

"Signed in behalf, and by order of the Convention,

"JOHN MURRAY,

"WILLIAM EUGENE IMLAY."

In a few days, he received the President's reply: —

"*To the Convention of the Universal Church, lately assembled in Philadelphia.*

"GENTLEMEN, — I thank you cordially for the congratulations which you offer on my appointment to the office I have the honor to hold in the government of the United States.

"It gives me the most sensible pleasure to find that in our nation, however different are the sentiments of citizens on religious doctrines, they generally concur in one thing, — for their political professions and practices are almost universally friendly to the order and happiness of our civil institutions. I am also happy in finding this disposition *particularly* evinced by your society. It is, moreover, my earnest desire that the members of every association or community throughout the United States may make such use of the auspicious years of peace, liberty, and free inquiry with which they are now favored, as they shall hereafter find occasion to rejoice for having done.

"With great satisfaction I embrace this opportunity to express my acknowledgments for the interest my affectionate fellow-citizens have taken in my recovery from a late dangerous indisposition. And I assure you, gentlemen, that in mentioning my obligations for the effusions of your benevolent wishes on my behalf, I feel animated with new zeal that my conduct may ever be worthy of your good opinion, as well as such as shall, in every respect, best comport with the character of an intelligent and accountable being.

"GEORGE WASHINGTON."

William Eugene Imlay, associated with Mr. Murray in this letter to President Washington, was at that time engaged in mercantile business in Imlaystown, Monmouth Co., N. J., the place of his birth. During the

War for Independence he was commissioned "Captain, Third Regiment, Hunterdon, also Captain in the Continental Army." In 1785 he purposed going West, and received from Governor Livingston, of New Jersey, a certificate addressed,

"To all whom it may concern," that "William Eugene Imlay, who intends to settle in the Western Country, is a gentleman who has, during our late conflict with Great Britain, approved himself a decided and active Whig; and as to his private and moral character, it is without reproach. He is, moreover, a gentleman of liberal education, and highly esteemed by all his acquaintances."

Another letter given at the same time and for the same purpose, signed by the members of the Legislative Council and General Assembly of New Jersey, speaks of him as "having served as captain in the army with reputation." If he went West, his stay was probably very short. In 1791, on certificates showing that he had studied medicine with Samuel F. Conover, and attended the lectures of Drs. Rush and Shippen in Philadelphia, he received a license to practise medicine. Subsequently he settled at Tom's River, N. J., and there practised medicine in connection with the sale of merchandise. He died in 1803.

Leaving New York and passing into Connecticut, Mr. Murray was importuned to preach in many places. He thus writes to a friend: —

"New Haven, Aug. 24, 1790.

"Thus far, you find, I am on my way to Boston. You wonder, perhaps, I am not more rapid in my progress. I wonder I am so much so, considering how much I have suffered from the heat of the weather and the warm en-

treaties of so many beseeching friends. It would give you and our Christian friends in general much real pleasure to see how the word of our Saviour prevails through the country. It is gaining fast, but without much observation it bids fair to be durable; it is in its progress slow but sure. I have met with more encouragement than I expected, and where I least expected it. I have been stopped on the road by persons I never saw before, who have most earnestly entreated me to stop and preach the gospel of our Saviour in places where I had never preached. Meeting-houses everywhere through this State opened to me, not excepting the city of New Haven, where I now am, and where, you know, resides the President Stiles, and the author Edwards, both of them so violent in their opposition to me and the testimony that, by the will of God, I am appointed to deliver. But let me tell you, our enemies have helped the cause they intended to destroy, and I am assured there are many more in this city who believe the gospel since Mr. Edwards has written so largely against it than ever there were before. This gentleman has been twice to hear me since I came to this city. I would to God there were more sent servants of the Living God to publish these glad tidings. The harvest, indeed, is great, but the laborers are few. Let us then attend to our Lord's admonition, 'Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth laborers.'

"My eastern connections seem uneasy that I am not more in haste to return, and very much alarmed in consequence of my so frequently expressing a wish to fix my residence with you. From the complexion of their letters, I have much reason to doubt the gaining their consent to move to the southward. I dread what is before me; it is very painful to be pulled different ways, and that by inclination also. It is hard to quarrel with people for giving us a preference, and very unnatural to

love them the less in consequence of their increase of affection; yet I foresee that I shall suffer in consequence of the affection of my friends, perhaps more than my enemies were ever able to make me suffer on any occasion. However, I will look unto my Divine Master for direction and protection, for increase of faith and increase of patience, and power to stand still, knowing that he is God."

Later, he writes to another Philadelphia friend: —

"Our proceedings in Philadelphia run on before me all the way, and gave us as a people much more respectability. In every place where I had formerly preached the word of God I was sought after, and in many places where I had not. I was surprised at the appearance of things in the Jersies, and was sorry it was not in my power to stay there longer. In New York I had no place to preach in, and the weather was intolerably hot. I made what haste I could to Connecticut, and there, from my first entrance into the State, in every town the meeting-houses were opened to receive me, and many faithful souls I met, where I did not expect to meet any. Surely this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. In some parts of Connecticut, however, I found much to trouble me, not from my enemies, but from my friends. There are some dangerous errors creeping in among the people, and I am afraid they will prevail. They teach that the day of the Lord is past, that there is no future sorrow to be apprehended, that there is no Devil but in the imagination, — in short, if you ever saw the book that Mr. Relly wrote against, written by one Richard Coppin,[1] you will find the principles now inculcated by some who call themselves be-

[1] Richard Coppin flourished in England in the middle of the seventeenth century, and was the subject of many persecutions. In Whittemore's Modern History of Universalism (vol. i., edition of 1860,

lievers in many parts of this State [Massachusetts] and Connecticut. On this account I wish much to travel from place to place, in order, if possible, to prevent the spread of those anti-Scriptural notions; at least, to let the public know they are not the principles we labor to inculcate. It is on this account also I wish to see churches established; they would have an eye to all such teachers, and if any of them through ignorance published falsehood, they would, by brethren in church connection, be taught the way of God more clearly. But I find that those who hold these wild notions are not fond of church fellowship, they are fond of liberty in its wildest latitude."

Who these Universalists were, we have no knowledge. Noah Murray, as we have seen, was preaching occasionally in Connecticut. He was not in accord with John Murray in many of his views, though in what particulars we are not able to learn. Possibly he may have entertained some of the views which Mr. Murray here refers to. In Massachusetts, Caleb Rich was probably, as intimated in a preceding chapter, preaching that sin and its consequences were wholly confined to flesh and blood.

pp. 109–130), will be found an extended notice of his labors and writings. "From all that we can collect concerning this writer, it appears that he was a man of unusual strength of mind, but without the advantages of literature; that he possessed a fervid and lively imagination, and exercised it in giving allegorical interpretations of the Scriptures, of which method of treating the word of God he seems to have been excessively fond; that he held many public disputations with the clergy of the Presbyterian and Independent churches, which circumstance shows that he was not beneath their notice, and that they viewed him as rather dangerous to their schemes of divinity; that he was calumniated and persecuted for his religious opinions, suffered much in support of the doctrine that he had espoused; and, finally, it appears that he believed in the immediate happiness of mankind when death dissolves the earthly tabernacle."

Passing from Connecticut into Rhode Island, Mr. Murray spent a few days in various parts of that State, preaching to old friends, and thence went to Taunton and Stoughton, Mass. At the latter place he anticipated much enjoyment in a visit to his friends of many years, — the family of General Richard Gridley; but death had entered that home the day before his arrival, and his joy was turned into mourning. The funeral of Mrs. Gridley, and other opportunities for religious discourse which the family and neighbors sought, enabled him to present Universalism to their attention as the religion of certain comfort.

Richard Gridley, born in Boston in 1710, was in early life a surveyor and civil engineer. In 1744, he entered military service under General Pepperell, erecting all the batteries which compelled the surrender of Louisburg, and directing with his own hand the aim of the mortar which dropped a shell directly into the fortress, and was the immediate cause of its evacuation. He also planned the battery, and other fortifications, on Governor's Island, in Boston Harbor, the year following the expedition against Louisburg, in anticipation of an attack from the French fleet. Fort William Henry, and all the fortifications around Lake George, were constructed on his plans, and under his supervision. At the second taking of Louisburg, he had charge of the advanced stores of the army; at the siege of Quebec, under General Wolfe, he commanded the artillery; and when, on the restoration of peace, he went to England to adjust his accounts with the government, there was bestowed upon him, for his distinguished services, the Magdalen Isles, with an extensive seal and cod fishery,

and a pension of half-pay as a British officer. On the eve of our War for Independence, his reply to a letter from his agent in England, as to which side he should take up arms on, was, "I shall fight for justice and my country." He was at once put in command of the artillery, and subsequently was "appointed Chief Engineer of the forces now raising in the Colony for the defence of the rights of the American Continent." He marked out the fortifications at Breed's Hill, and on the day of the memorable battle, aided in working the cannon against the British. At his furnace in Stoughton (the part of the town that is now Canton), he made for the patriot army the first cannon and mortars ever cast in this country. The breastworks and redoubt at Dorchester Heights were planned by him. Of them, Silliman said, in his Journal, "In history, they were equalled only by the lines and forts raised by Julius Cæsar to surround the army of Pompey." In 1776, he was "ordered by Washington to attend to the fortifications on Cape Ann, and protect the harbor of Gloucester. While performing his duties here, he attended the ministrations of the Rev. John Murray; and it was but a step for one who had been an admirer of Mayhew and Chauncy, to become a decided and enthusiastic Universalist." When independence was gained, the citizens of the town in which General Gridley had so long made his home determined on celebrating the glad event. It was in 1783.

"Men who have taken part in the dangers and trials of the war, greet at the church door their companions in arms. Young men and maidens, brave in holiday attire, come from far and near to join in the festivities. In the

pulpit sits the pastor who has ministered to this people for over half a century, and by his side, the distinguished orator of the day. On that great day, when the thanks of the people were to be returned to the immortal veterans of the war, and when thanksgiving was to be offered to Almighty God for the success of our arms, and the establishment of the Republic, Richard Gridley was left out in the cold, uninvited, forced to remain at home, and see, with feelings that can be better imagined than described, the great concourse of people pass his house to celebrate the return of peace, — that peace to which he had contributed more than any of them. The question will naturally be asked, Why was a man, so distinguished in the art of war, and with so noble a record, allowed to remain away from this celebration? When Pedaretus, the Spartan, missed the honor of being elected one of the three hundred who held a distinguished rank in the city, he went home well satisfied, saying he was glad to know there were three hundred men in Sparta more honorable than he. Gridley could hardly say this. Had he been guilty of some heinous crime, for which he must be ostracized from the society of his neighbors and townspeople? Far from it. Gridley could not understand this intentional neglect; and he inquired of an intimate friend of his, why it was that he had received no invitation to the celebration. His friend reluctantly answered him in these words: 'Because, General, you are not considered, by those having the matter in charge, a Christian.' His friend alluded to the fact that Gridley had become a Universalist in religious belief. The old veteran paused a moment, dropped his head upon his breast, and then, with solemn and impressive speech, uttered these words: 'I love my God, my country, and my neighbor as myself. If they have any better religion, I should like to know what it is.'"

General Gridley died in 1796, and his funeral was attended by Mr. Murray.[1]

Arrived in Gloucester, Mr. Murray wrote to Philadelphia, Nov. 1: —

"I sit down to write you, this time, with a much greater weight on my spirits than I ever felt on any former occasion. I am grateful for the affection you feel for me, that made you wish me to make your loved city my delightful home; but it must not be. I am not permitted, at this time, to fix my residence there. Ten miles from Boston, I was met by a committee from the meeting I have been long engaged in there, in order to get me to consent to fix my residence with them. They will not hear, with patience, any proposal for my departure. I urged to them, at that time, and the Sunday that I spent with them, to the whole Society, that they had a Dr. Lathrop, and a Mr. Clarke,[2] who were said to

[1] For these facts, we are indebted to an oration by Daniel T. V. Huntoon, at the dedication of a monument to General Gridley, at Canton, Mass., May 30, 1877; and to an article on "Major-General Richard Gridley," by Rev. Edwin Davis, in the Universalist Quarterly, for July, 1876. The monument erected to his memory bears the following inscriptions: —

"This monument is erected, by the citizens of Canton, to the memory of Richard Gridley, as a tribute of honor and gratitude to one whose life was spent in the service of his country. Born Jan. 3, 1710. Died June 21, 1796."

"A veteran of three wars. He commanded the artillery of His Majesty's army at the siege of Louisburg; he stood by the side of Wolfe at the fall of Quebec; and as Major-General, and Chief Engineer of the Patriot Army, he planned the fortifications on Bunker Hill, and, on the day of the battle, fell wounded."

"'I shall fight for justice and my country.'"

"'I love my God, my country, and my neighbor as myself.' Washington wrote: 'I know of no man better fitted to be Chief Engineer than General Gridley.'"

[2] Rev. John Lathrop, D. D., was pastor of the Old North, or Second, Church. After the Revolution, his congregation united with the wor-

be in the way of truth. They replied, that every one who went to hear either of them, in expectation of hearing the gospel, found themselves miserably disappointed; that they were both time-serving men, and, indeed, did not seem to have the *knowledge* of the truth. On the whole, they declared they would not give their consent; they could not hold me, but, if I moved from Gloucester, they would engage to give me as good support as any of the clergy in the town of Boston have. I then informed them of a proposal made me in Connecticut, which was, not to settle anywhere, but, as long as I was able, pass and repass from Boston to Philadelphia, visiting the various places where I have preached the word of God, and where I am anxiously desired to preach it. This last proposal, I seem inclined to think, would be more for the good of the cause we are embarked in. God only knows what is to be done with me, or by me. I can come to no determination at present.

"My determined foes in this place have brought me into the law again. I had not been in this town one hour before I was served with a writ, and am obliged to defend myself once more. It is said they cannot hurt me, but they have hurt me already, — they have wounded my peace. They will oblige me again to have recourse to lawyers, and they will put me to more expense, — at least, my friends will be to more expense, — and that will make my bond here so much the stronger."

The occasion of this suit was a decision of the courts, that a resident of an incorporated parish could not divert the tax imposed on him for the support of religious worship, to maintain an unincorporated society. This was a reversal of the decision of 1786, and, of

shippers in the "New Brick Church," on Hanover street. Rev. John Clarke, D. D., mentioned in a preceding chapter as colleague with Dr. Chauncy, became the successor of the latter at the First Church.

course, threw open the whole question, which it was supposed had then been decided. For some reason, the suit was not pressed to trial; but the Gloucester society, weary of such annoyances, and in dread of their repetition, petitioned the Legislature for an act of incorporation, which was granted June 28, 1792, in which they were named "The Independent Christian Church in Gloucester."

CHAPTER V.

1791 - 1793.

Statistics furnished by Mr. Murray to Miss Hannah Adams' "View of Religions." — Articles of Faith adopted by the Church in Boston. — Efforts made to induce other Congregations to adopt them. — Rev. William Hawkins. — Rev. Mr. Pollard. — Letter of the Convention on Future Punishment. — Convention Hymn-Book. — Composition of the Session in 1791. — Rev. Michael Coffin. — Rev. Joab Young. — Rev. Zebulon Streeter. — Rev. William Farewell. — Rev. Hosea Ballou. — Sensation caused by Rev. Jonathan Maxcy's Sermon on the Death of Rev. James Manning, D. D. — Mr. Murray's Pamphlet on Forming a Christian Church, etc. — Prosperity in the Denomination in 1792. — New Hymn-Book. — The Philadelphia Convention. — Request for the Formation of a Convention in New England. — Another Request. — Both Granted. — Rev. Abel Sarjent. — Divine Sovereignty and Free Will. — Troubles occasioned by Disputes on. — Also, on the Question of no Future Punishment. — Condition of the Denomination in New England. — Rev. Abel Sarjent's "Questions to the Teachers in Israel." — Republication of, in German, and Discussion on. — The Philadelphia Convention of 1793. — Alice Brown, and the Church at New Hanover, N. J. — Change of Place of Worship in Philadelphia. — New Church on Lombard Street. — "The Free Universal Magazine." — Unitarian Universalism. — Free Religious Enquiring Society. — Christopher Marshall, on Intense Future Punishment. — His Zeal for the Spread of Universalism. — Christopher Gadsden, of South Carolina, a Universalist. — Rev. J. Bailey, on the Denial of Future Punishment. — Rev. William Bledsoe. — Universalists in Kentucky. — Testimony of Rev. Peter Cartwright to this fact. — Rev. James O. Kelly, Founder of the Republican Methodist Church. — Dr. Beverly Allen. — "C. H." on Anti-Trinitarianism. — Rev. Abel Sarjent against Future Punishment. — Also, against Vicarious Atonement. — New England Convention organized. — Mr. Murray Moves to Boston in 1793. — Rev. Noah Murray, and the Conversion of Rev. Moses Park. — Biographical Sketch of Rev. Moses Park. — Colonel Joseph Kingsbury. — Joseph Kinney, Esq. — Mrs. Julia H. Scott. — Joseph Young, M. D., publishes "Calvinism and Universalism contrasted." — Biographical Sketch of Dr. Young.

COMING to the year 1791, we find among the earliest items of historic interest a letter of Mr.

Murray, under date of January 7, addressed to a Philadelphia correspondent, in which is the following: —

"Miss Hannah Adams some time since wrote an account of the various denominations found in the Christian, or, perhaps, it may with more propriety be said, in the anti-Christian, world, with their various tenets. She is now going to give the public a new edition of this so useful and entertaining work. Her father called on me awhile ago, requesting me that I would furnish them with an account of *our* principles, and the number of our connected churches or societies. I referred them to the Articles of the Convention for the former, and promised I would write to my Philadelphia friends for the latter, so far as their means of information may extend. You will, my good friend, obtain what information you can, by all the inquiries you can make by letter or otherwise, and send on the intelligence to me as soon as you can."

The work thus referred to — "A View of Religions," etc., etc. — contains fourteen pages of the respective views of Dr. Chauncy and Mr. Murray; devotes half a page to a description of the Philadelphia Convention, which is all the Universalist convention that it mentions; and states that in Massachusetts there are "four congregations of Universalists embracing the sentiments of Rev. Mr. Murray. There are also Chauncean Universalists" (pages 257–265, 374, 384). The absence of any mention of the association formed at Oxford in 1785, seems, under the circumstances, conclusive proof that it had ceased to exist.

Mention was made in the preceding chapter of opposition in organizing the church in Boston to the wording of the Articles of Faith, as being defective in statement

with regard to the divinity of Christ, but that the opposition had been overcome, and the Articles adopted without alteration. This was alleged to have been done in January, 1791. A month later, as appears from the records, the opposition succeeded in carrying several amendments, and in recasting the Articles in the following form: —

"We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to contain a revelation of the perfections and will of God, and the rule of faith and practice.

"We believe in one God, infinite in all His perfections, and that these perfections are all modifications of adorable, incomprehensible, and unchangeable love, manifested to us in Christ Jesus.

"We believe that the Spirit of God will, in due season, so effectually teach all men that the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord (whom to know is life eternal) as the waters cover the sea: for it is written, 'They shall be all taught of God.'

"We believe in the obligation of the moral precepts of the Scriptures as the rule of life; and we hold that the love of God manifested to man in a Redeemer is the best means of producing a holy, active, and useful life."

These alterations, we may suppose, were intended to make a more explicit statement of Rellyanism. Certainly they are not any more Trinitarian than were those which they supplanted. The basis of the Rellyan theory, as before stated, was Sabellian.

The Boston church, having settled upon the above Articles of Faith, sought to bring other congregations into organized form on this basis, and to this end wrote to the believers in Grafton, Attleborough, Milford, Bellingham, Warwick, and Egremont, Mass., Providence,

R. I., and Nobletown, Columbia Co., N. Y. How many of these responded favorably is not known. The society in Egremont refused to adopt it, querying "whether a particular compact can be entered into to satisfy the different members in so large a field."

Rev. Caleb Rich, for the Society in Warwick, responded, expressing a preference for the

"Articles of Faith adopted by the Convention at Philadelphia. They are, by all our brethren in these parts, judged to be more consistent with the liberty of the gospel than any that ever were presented to our view before. We join in saying that they are expressive of our belief in the lively oracles, etc. We have adopted Articles of Faith almost word for word with them, and have annexed to them a covenant or uniting compact; and it is only for want of opportunity that we do not enclose a copy of the same."

At the second session of the Convention at Philadelphia, in May, it was apparent, says the circular letter, that the recommendation of the former session that those who believe "with us in the salvation of all men should associate and form themselves into churches, has been complied with to a degree which has equalled our most sanguine expectations. Several churches have likewise formed, which are too remote to unite with us."

One new minister was in attendance on this session, — Rev. William Hawkins, of Maryland, concerning whom we have no further information.

Mr. Hawkins reported that Rev. Mr. Pollard had commenced preaching Universalism in Maryland, and had been assailed with the charge that Universalists deny future punishment, and desired information as to

what theory on that subject was endorsed by the Convention. Major James Moore was appointed to draft an answer, and the following was approved by the Convention: —

"PHILADELPHIA, May 28, 1791.

"*Dear Brother in Belief of the Truth,* — We have had a visit from our Brother Hawkins, who hath been received as a member in our Convention met in this city the 25th instant. He hath given us such a report of you, and the hopeful evidences of God's universal love and power prevailing in your parts and under your labors, as rejoices us and for which we desire to be thankful.

"Brother Hawkins mentioned your request to the Convention that they would furnish you with such evidences of their faith as might enable you to contradict and put to silence those who, either through malice or ignorance, assert that we deny future punishment, by holding that all the fallen sons of Adam, the good and the bad, the believer and the unbeliever, go and appear equally alike happy in that state that shall take place after the dissolution of this body. The Convention are well convinced that this unjust slander doth too much prevail among those that are ignorant of our true principles. Notwithstanding all our writings and public declarations and private conversations do declare to the contrary, they have ordered me to write you a few lines on that subject; and as you will have an opportunity of hearing and receiving from Brother Hawkins our sentiments more fully, I shall be short.

"We do disclaim, neither are we in connection with, any that hold the above sentiment (if such there be). So far from that, we do believe that all that die without the knowledge of their salvation in Christ Jesus must be called unbelievers, and in the Scripture sense, do die in their sins; that such will not be purged from their sins

or unbelief by death, but necessarily must appear in the next state under all that darkness, fear, and torment, and conscious guilt which is the natural consequence of the unbelief of the truth. What may be the degree or duration of this state of unbelief and misery we know not. But this we know, if it be the just judgment and chastisement of our God, who is the Father of all spirits, that it hath one uniform and invariable end, namely, the good of the creature. For the Father chastiseth every son he loveth, and if we are without chastisement (whereof all are partakers), we are bastards and not sons. And here we see that chastisement is an undoubted evidence of all that are chastised being sons, and we know there are no bastards, for all are chastised. We do know that by faith Noah believed God and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith, by which he condemned the world. But we do know (at least by the authority of the Apostle Peter) that after our Saviour and theirs was put to death in the flesh and quickened by the Spirit, he went and preached to those very identical spirits then in prison which sometime had been disobedient; and we do know by the same authority that the gospel was preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. We do know that Sodom and Gomorrah suffered the vengeance of eternal fire, but we do know by the same authority that they, together with the rebellious house of Israel, shall be restored, as is clearly set forth in the sixteenth of Ezekiel's prophecy.

"But it would be needless to repeat all those divine records that hold forth the restitution of all things spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world began. We would refer you to this matter as mentioned by Dr. Stonehouse, Ramsey, Mr. Relly, Dr. Chauncy, Mr. Winchester, and many more; and to two small pieces now

ordered to be printed as an answer to Dr. Samuel Jones' illiberal, unjust, foolish, and incompetent letter, written by him, and adopted by the Baptist Association in New York as their circular letter.

"Now, dear friend, however you may be enabled to defend in public God's universal love and power, and in consequence the restoration of all his creatures, and preach that it is not to be perfected in time, but in the dispensation of the fulness of time, yet many that even thus hear your labors will go away and say you hold no future punishment; for such there are yet in the world who are despisers, and will not believe although a man declare it unto them. But be not discouraged, truth will prevail.

"I am, dear brother,

"Your soul's well-wisher in Jesus,

"J. M."

The Convention also gave itself to the consideration of the need of a hymn-book, and appointed a committee to prepare a collection, of which we shall say more in a chapter on hymnology. There were present at the session delegates from eight societies, exclusive of the congregations or organizations in Maryland. These were, Philadelphia, New Britain, Pittsgrove, Pilesgrove, Kingwood, Cape May, Upper Freehold, Shiloh. The four last, all located in New Jersey, were new organizations, chiefly composed of converts from the Baptists. Those at Shiloh came off from the Seventh-Day Baptists.

At the eastward there were also gains in 1791. Early in the year Michael Coffin was preaching in Clarendon and Pawlet, Vermont; and Whitehall, Granville, and Ballston, in New York. Mr. Coffin, a native

of Cavendish, Vt., was a school-teacher before entering the ministry, and perhaps for some time after. He was a man of a clear and logical mind, and of quick perception and ready wit. He itinerated for several years in Vermont and New Hampshire, and in some parts of Massachusetts, supplying the society in Oxford one half of the time during three years, beginning in 1794. Subsequently he withdrew from the ministry and settled in Western New York, where he devoted most of his time to the practice of the Thompsonian system of medicine.

Joab Young also commenced to preach about the same time in the region of Grantham, Warner, and Deering, N. H. Possibly he may have engaged in the work a few years before this. "He was," says the late Dr. Whittemore, "an ardent preacher, and excited much attention in his day. After preaching in some parts of New Hampshire, he settled in Strafford, Vt., where, we believe, he died." [1]

Zebulon Streeter, a brother of Adams Streeter, before mentioned, commenced preaching as early as 1791. He was a saintly man, of great moral excellence, and, as we shall hereafter see, often occupied posts of distinction among his brethren, especially at convention seasons. His mental abilities were of a high order; but his gifts of speech were meagre, and he is reported to have said: "I would willingly part with all my earthly possessions, if it would make me able to preach with the eloquence of my brother Adams." He died in September, 1808, in the town of Surrey, New Hampshire.

[1] Life of Rev. Hosea Ballou, vol. i. pp. 83, 84.

William Farewell, who had embraced the doctrine of Universalism not far from the year 1788, was ordained at Charlestown, N. H., in 1791, Revs. Caleb Rich and Zebulon Streeter conducting the services. New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Vermont, Maine, and some parts of New York State, were his field of labor. In the beginnings of his ministry, he received little or no compensation for his services, but spent, it is said, quite a comfortable estate. Schoolhouses, barns, groves, and dwelling-houses were his ordinary places of worship. He was well-read in the Scriptures, and skilful in using them in debates, which, in his day, were frequent.

"His sincerity," says Rev. W. S. Balch, "was never called in question, not even by his clerical opponents, who thought him deluded. All honored his mildness and sweetness of temper, and respected him as a genuine Christian, however severely they censured his heretical opinions. It was often said of him, by his opposers, that his *life* did more evil than his preaching."

He died at an advanced age, in Barre, Vt., in 1823.[1]

But by far the most eminent and influential of all who entered the Universalist ministry at this time, was Hosea Ballou. The son of Rev. Maturin Ballou, a Baptist clergyman, he was born in Richmond, N. H., April 30, 1771. Just before reaching his nineteenth year, he became the subject of a revival, and united with the

[1] Several valuable biographical sketches of Mr. Farewell have been written, — one by Rev. J. E. Palmer, published in the Christian Repository, in 1853; one by Rev. W. S. Balch, in the Universalist Union, April, 1840; and another by Rev. Lemuel Willis, in The Universalist, January, 1875.

church of which his father was the pastor. Almost immediately, however, his attention was drawn to the subject of Universalism, by conversation with James Ballou, previously mentioned, a distant relative, and others who occasionally attended on the ministry of Rev. Caleb Rich. Stimulated by their discourse, he soon, by the fresh study of the Bible, became convinced of the truth of the doctrine which they advocated. He then went to reside with his brother David, who had become a Universalist preacher; and with some assistance from him in investigating the Scriptures, and at his solicitation, Hosea preached his first sermon in the fall of 1791. His friends who heard him "had their doubts whether he had a talent for such labor." His second attempt was a complete failure; but he persevered, and almost immediately gave his entire time to the work of the ministry, and continued uninterruptedly in it for nearly sixty-two years. He early exerted an influence in shaping the thought of the Universalist Church, and to him, more than to any other, its present system of theology is due. As we progress in the record of our history, we shall have frequent occasion to consider his views, and his labors.

No little sensation was excited in New England by the publication, in 1791, of a sermon preached by Rev. Jonathan Maxcy, A. M., on the death of Rev. James Manning, D. D., President of Rhode Island College, now Brown University. The first edition of this sermon contained sentences which conveyed the impression to its readers that the author was a believer in Universal Salvation; and, in consequence, no little controversy followed. Mr. Murray, in transmitting a copy

of the sermon to his friend, Rev. Robert Redding, a Baptist minister in England, thus wrote:—

"I enclose you, my loved friends, a funeral sermon delivered by the President of Rhode Island College, on the death of the late President. One of the first principles on which this College is founded, is, that the *President, forever*, shall be a Baptist. This President was brought up in this College, is a member of the Baptist Church, was ordained the minister thereof, is a very extraordinary man, is much famed for his piety and learning. But for some time past they have suspected him. They have thought him tainted with heresy; and on the delivery of this sermon, the fears of his clerical brethren, and the members of his church, could be suppressed no longer. They took for granted that he believed with his heart the part of his sermon I have marked; and, on his not denying the charge, they could not again hear him with comfort. He is no more their minister! The Trustees [of the College], however, cannot think of parting with him, and wish much to keep him in his present character, even though he should believe, in his heart, the restitution of all things. It is true, they own it is a very dangerous error to believe that every part of human nature shall be finally saved from sin, and sorrow, the sad consequence thereof. But then, as he is really a very pious man, and a very learned man, they pray he may continue. But, his constitution being very infirm, he thinks it will be much to his advantage to travel, and has, therefore, prayed them to furnish themselves with a President before the expiration of the year. You will give me your opinion of the sermon. There are some parts of it I do not much approve."

The sermon was from the text, "The last enemy which shall be destroyed is death." 1 Cor. xv. 26.

After considering the respects in which death appears to be our enemy, the preacher added: —

"And yet, formidable as he is, complete as his victory appears, we have the joyful, solemn news to declare, 'this enemy shall be destroyed.' The text styles him the last enemy. Yet we shall obtain the victory. The devil was man's first enemy, and death is his last. Both shall be destroyed. Christ 'hath abolished death;' he was manifest in the flesh, 'that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.' Christ has struck the blow which will complete the victory, in the destruction of death." Then, in considering "How shall death be destroyed?" the preacher said: "It is fully evident that, as to restoration from death, all men gain in Christ what they lost in Adam, because the argumentation, in the verses preceding our text, evinces that Christ abolished that death which Adam incurred."

Finally, the consequences of the destruction of death were thus described: —

"The malice of Satan will revert upon his own head; his fraudulent designs against man's happiness will terminate in the glory of God. The old serpent, — subtile, envious, revengeful, — thought to dishonor God's government, in seducing man to rebellion, and in subjecting him to mortality. But immediately 'the seed' was revealed, that should bruise the serpent's head; that should counteract and frustrate all his evil machinations. 'For this purpose, the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.' 1 John, iii. 8. Christ assumed our nature, 'that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.' Heb. ii. 14. Satan undoubtedly supposed he had defeated the gracious designs of Heaven for man's re-

demption, by effecting the crucifixion of Christ. But even in his last effort, his malicious schemes turned to his own destruction. Christ's death destroyed death. It gave Satan his mortal wound. It began to dig that mine which is rapidly advancing under his kingdom, and which will finally engulf it in ruin.

"Another important consequence of the destruction of the last enemy is, the restoration of the dead to immortality. A flood of glory bursts from the sun of righteousness, shines through the wastes of death, and discovers man restored from ruin, rejoicing in life, and dressed in the robes of immortality. Rejoice, O man! Victory is thine, through the dying Saviour. Look forward! view thy future self; how changed from this imperfect state, beyond the reach of death! Rejoice in that period when the voice of God shall sound through the universe, and set the prisoner free."

These expressions justified the suspicion and inference, that Mr. Maxcy believed in Universal Salvation. Whatever he may have said to his friends in reply to this inference, we do not know; but, in 1796, he published a new edition of the sermon, with a preface, in which he demurs against the construction which had been put upon these words. He explains that, in his view, the death threatened to Adam was natural death only; and protests that

"Nothing in the following discourse is so inconsistent with orthodox divinity as some have supposed. I may be in error. If I be, possibly I may not be destitute of companions, even from among those who determine never to deviate from opinions they have once adopted."

In a foot-note, under the expression "that Christ abolished that death which Adam incurred," he says:

"1 Cor. xv. 22: 'As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' These words make it evident that those made alive by Christ are as numerous as those subjected to death by Adam. Language cannot express this idea with more certainty. Those, therefore, who believe that the death introduced by Adam was temporal, spiritual, and eternal, if they would be consistent, ought to believe in universal salvation. For Christ has abolished from all, the death produced by Adam. Note the particularity of this expression, 'even so in Christ shall all be made alive.'"

His independence and catholicity, however, were in marked contrast with the spirit manifested by his contemporaries, as witness this declaration in the preface: —

"The only thing really essential to Christian union is love, or benevolent affection. It is, therefore, with me a fixed principle to censure no man, except for immorality. A diversity of religious opinions, in a state so imperfect, obscure, and sinful as the present, is to be expected. An entire coincidence in sentiment, even in important doctrines, is by no means essential to Christian society, or the attainment of eternal felicity. How many are there who appear to have been subjects of regeneration, who have scarcely an entire, comprehensive view of one doctrine in the Bible! Will the gates of Paradise be barred against these, because they did not possess the penetrating sagacity of an Edwards or a Hopkins? Or shall these great theological champions engross heaven, and shout hallelujahs from its walls, while a Priestley, a Price, and a Winchester — merely for difference in opinion, though pre-eminent in virtue — must sink into the regions of darkness and pain?"

Sometime during the year 1791 Mr. Murray pub-

lished a pamphlet bearing the following title: "Some Hints relative to the Forming of a Christian Church, — to the Right Understanding of the Scriptures as the *only* Rule given by the Great Head of the Church for the Direction thereof; to the Rectifying of a few Mistakes respecting some Doctrines propagated under the Christian Name. Concluding with the Character of a Consistent Universalist; in a Letter to a Friend." A few pages are given to a description of the believer's duties as citizens and as Christians, then a few to a detailed plan of the manner in which, even without the aid of a preacher, they can carry on regular religious services; and then occurs the following statement of his idea of what the Scriptures teach: —

"The Scriptures give an account of a just God who, in the law which he gave by Moses, denounces death and the curse of the law upon every one who continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them; but in the same Scriptures we have an account of the same God, manifested in the flesh, as the head of every man made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, being made a curse for them; and this revelation is that gospel which is glad tidings to every child of Adam, because every child of Adam being once under the law, and a transgressor of the law, was consequently under the sentence of death, and subjected to the curse. Jesus, having redeemed the human sinner by tasting death for every man, being the Saviour not of a few individuals only, but of all men, the gospel, which is a divine declaration of this truth, is, indeed, glad tidings to every fallen sinner. When we read in the Scriptures of wrath, tribulation, death, etc., we know that God speaketh in his legislative character, as he was manifested by Moses, as the just God, who will by no means clear

the guilty; but when we read of grace, mercy, and peace, of life as the gift of God, of salvation began or completed, we know that the same God speaketh in the language of Zion, in the character of the just God and the Saviour. The one is the language of the law, the other is the language of the gospel. Whatever in any part of the Scripture manifests sin, and the punishment due to sin, is the law; whatever exhibits Jesus as bearing the sin of the world, and suffering the punishments due thereunto, so making peace by the blood of the cross, is gospel. Wherever I find the Scriptures speaking of a reconciled God, well pleased for his (Jesus') sake, I find the gospel, the believing of which gospel is accompanied by a salvation from all the misery to which we are exposed while we believe the law only and not the gospel.

"The Scriptures speak of a judgment *past* and a judgment *yet to come.* The past judgment is, first, where the world was judged in the second Adam, according to the testimony of the Saviour, 'Now is the judgment of this world; now is the prince of this world cast out,' and death executed upon them, according to the righteous judgment of God. Secondly, every one taught of God judges himself, and therefore he shall not be judged. Judge yourselves and ye shall not be judged. The judgment *to come* is that last great day, when all who have not judged themselves, all unbelievers of the human race, and all the fallen angels, through whose influence unbelievers are held in a state of darkness and blindness, and who, as the deceivers of mankind, are reserved in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day; these shall then all be judged by the Saviour of the world. But the angelic and the human sinners shall then be separated, the one shall be placed on the right, the other on the left hand; the one addressed as the sheep, for whose salvation the Redeemer laid down

his life; the other as the accursed, whose nature he passed by. The human nature, as the offspring of the everlasting Father, and the ransomed of the Lord, shall by divine power be brought into the kingdom prepared for them before the foundation of the world; the angelic nature will be sent into the fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

"The Scriptures lead us, by various and striking figures, to the contemplation of the Prince of Peace, and to his contrast, the prince of the power of the air. Sometimes these figures are taken from men, sometimes from things; everything good is expressive of Christ and his salvation; everything bad, of the adversary and his destruction. The Prince of Peace came to save human nature from the power and dominion of the devil and his works; he came to destroy the *latter* that he might save the *former*. He was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, and he shall save his people from their sins. This, indeed, he hath done when he put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and this he will do when he shall give his holy angels charge to collect every seed sown by the enemy in the human nature; that as tares, as evil seed sown by the Evil One, they may be separated from the good seed, which, when it was sown by the Son of Man, by whom all things were made, was pronounced very *good*, and will again be *as good* when the evil that came from the Evil One is separated from it. The Son of Man, agreeably to the records of truth, shall take out of his kingdom, — which kingdom will be composed of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, for the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of God and of his Christ, — out of his kingdom, I say, the Son of Man will take out everything that offends, and *those* who do iniquity.

"There is nothing can give offence but sin, and sin is the work of the devil, — of that spirit which now work-

eth in the hearts of the children of disobedience; as, then, this evil spirit is the worker, or doer, of whatever gives offence, Jesus, as the Saviour of the world, shall in the fulness of time separate from his kingdom both the evil *worker* and his evil works; the evil workers in the characters of goats, the evil works in the character of tares.

"When the sower of the evil seed, and all the evil seed sown, shall be separated from the seed which God sowed, then the seed which is properly the seed of God will be like Him who sowed it, — holy and pure, as God is holy and pure; when the veil shall be taken away, and the face of the covering from all people, every eye shall then see the Saviour as he is, and they who see him as he is shall be like him; for the Redeemer is able to change even these vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto his own glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself. Thus stands the gospel of the grace of God, as revealed in the Scriptures. It must be confessed, there are in the Bible many things which may appear dark to us, our weakness is even infantile, and the prejudices of education tyrannize over the mind; the power of the adversary is great, and the purpose of God reserves the complete manifestation of himself to futurity. Our Saviour teaches us to look forward to a brighter day, when we shall attain a perfection of knowledge, knowing as we are known. Here we know but in part, but blessed be our divinely gracious Teacher, who in mercy hath made us acquainted with the purpose purposed on the whole earth, who hath assured us it is the will of God that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, while reason as well as revelation teaches us that a Being who is almighty will do *all his pleasure*, and fulfil all his will. I wish, therefore, that as new-born babes you may desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby."

Following this, he has a few words respecting ordinances, in which he takes, as to baptism, substantially the ground advanced in the suit against the First Parish in Gloucester, and is catholic in his feelings towards those who may hold quite diverse views in regard to the Lord's Supper.

"The Universalists, as Christians, admit of but one baptism, — the baptizer, Christ Jesus, and the elements made use of, the Holy Ghost and fire. Yet they believe that John, by divine direction, baptized with water; but even this, though established by divine authority, they consider in the same point of view in which they are directed to consider a variety of other ordinances that were established by the same authority; in that dispensation they consider it merely as a figure. Water is a purifying element, but it can only remove external filth; it, however, goes as far as a figure can go, and very properly preceded that *one* baptism of our divine Master which should effectually cleanse from all filthiness of flesh and spirit. Hence, he who baptized with water said, 'He that cometh after me is mightier than I; I, indeed, baptize you with water unto repentance, but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.'

"We consider the ordinance commonly called the Lord's Supper as a very expressive emblem of the salvation of the human family in Christ Jesus. We are, however, informed that this emblem may be used *worthily* or *unworthily;* and he that eateth and drinketh *unworthily*, eateth and drinketh damnation, or condemnation, to himself; and we are furthermore taught that the worthy receiver, in receiving, discerns the LORD'S body, and that the unworthy receiver does not discern the LORD'S body.

"Yet, although the people called Universalists, associating as Christians in church fellowship, generally

adopt as their most reasonable service this divinely expressive ordinance, yet they do not hold themselves in subjection thereto, they are subject *to no shadows;* and while they hold this ordinance in the highest estimation as an ordinance, yet they think the exercise of charity much greater, and are therefore determined that difference of mind or manners respecting the use of this or any other ordinance shall never interrupt the gentle flow of their Christian affection toward each other. On the whole, the people called Universalists determine with the Apostle, to know nothing, either as a *whole* or a *part*, directly or indirectly essential to their salvation, but Jesus Christ and him crucified."

The fact — or rumor of it — that many and conflicting theories are held, and called Universalism, gives him great uneasiness, and he thus expresses himself: —

"I hear from many that the doctrine of God our Saviour prevaileth much throughout the Union; but from some examples which have come under my observation, I am apprehensive that he who was a liar from the beginning has been practising upon the minds of the credulous; that, under the name of the Christian doctrines, he has imposed heresies as far from the testimony of the everlasting gospel as this arch-deceiver can possibly fabricate. There may be as much anti-Scriptural, irrational, inconsistent stuff propagated under the name of the Universal, or, as some choose to term it, Murray's doctrine, as there can be under any other name. I have sometimes imagined that a few dreamers have taken their ideas from our enemies; and, believing we defended those detestable doctrines with which our calumniators reproach us, they undertake to support them, though, in thus doing, they do as much violence to divine revelation as any of the advocates for a partial salvation.

"The adversary being convinced that he cannot hurt the cause of truth by his own disciples, who are our inveterate foes, has, therefore, raised up some advocates for some truths, that, through their instrumentality, he may the more effectually injure the cause of truth, and still retain the ransomed of the LORD in his kingdom.

"Permit me to point out a few of the errors which are preached, and received, by some individuals who call themselves Universalists: —

"First, Because our Saviour hath finished the work which was given him to do for us men, and for our salvation, it is asserted that we who are saved by the LORD, with an everlasting salvation, have nothing at all to do! This is a vile, detestable error; it is contrary to reason, as well as to revelation. Indeed, whatever is opposed to reason is equally opposed to revelation. It is true, we have not that to do, in order to save ourselves, which was done by Jesus Christ; but, being completely saved in Jesus Christ, we have much to do. 'Ye are,' saith the Spirit of truth, 'bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your bodies and spirits, which are his.' Let those who have believed be careful to maintain good. Good what? Good *words?* No, truly; good *works.* But in what respect can works done by us be good? Can they be profitable to God? No; but they can be *pleasing to God,* because *profitable unto men.* In this view, they are *good works;* for, as all men are dear to, and beloved by the LORD, in doing good unto all according to our ability, we may be said to glorify and please God. But it is said by some: 'We have nothing to hope, in consequence of thus doing; nor have we anything to fear from the neglect of acknowledged duties; the doctrine of rewards and punishments is a legal, and, therefore, in this gospel day, a justly exploded doctrine; we know that Jesus, being made under the law, hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, and, therefore, hath become the end of

the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth.' That Jesus was made, under the law, for the purpose of redeeming them that were under the law; that he hath accomplished the work he came into the world to do, by redeeming the lost nature; that he is, indeed, the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, — are divine truths, which we are neither able nor willing to oppose. But upon this truth of God, thus manifested, depends another truth. If Jesus Christ hath redeemed us, then we are not our own; we have one Master, we have one Father, the Redeemer of men; if we obey not this Master, — if we walk not according to the direction of this Father, — he will visit our transgressions with a rod. Though we are, indeed, redeemed unto God by the blood of Jesus, if we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Though the human family do, indeed, constitute the fulness of the Saviour's body, they are delivered from condemnation only while they walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; and though the faithfulness of the just God, as the Saviour, can never fail, yet he shall reward every man according to his works. That work of God which was wrought by the head of every man, will be rewarded by the eternal salvation of all men. The work of the *mere* creature, being according to the nature of the creature, shall have its reward. If, therefore, the ransomed of the LORD, following the direction of their LORD and Master, act consistent with their character, shall they not be rewarded? Assuredly they shall; they shall be most amply rewarded; we have the promise of our blessed Master, guaranteeing the reward. Whoso giveth even a cup of cold water to a disciple shall have a disciple's reward. Whoso giveth unto the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and, look! what he layeth out shall be paid him again. God is not unmindful of our works of faith,

and labors of love. What! because we cannot purchase heaven by our doings, or destroy death and hell by our labors, does it follow that we have, as dwelling in this world, nothing to hope, and nothing to fear? Because Jesus died for all, are all, therefore, to live unto themselves? Nay; but he dying for all, all who live are, therefore, bound to live, not unto themselves, but to him who died for them. Let it, indeed, be proved that Jesus did not die for them, — that they are not bought with a price, — then they are still their own; and if they be their own, they may still live unto themselves. But no one of the human race hath a right thus to presume to live unto himself, inasmuch as Jesus gave himself a ransom for all, and, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man. Assuredly, my friend, the ransomed of the LORD will find it as much their interest as it is their duty, to glorify God in their bodies, and their spirits, which are his; they will find it their interest, if they have much, to give abundantly; if they have little, to do their diligence, gladly to give of that little; for thus doing, they will lay up for themselves a great reward.

"The reward to which the man Christ Jesus is entitled, in consequence of the works he wrought, is the eternal salvation of Jew and Gentile, as his inheritance. So that all the Father had, being given unto him, they may be ultimately with him to behold his glory.

"Secondly, It has been affirmed that the day of the LORD, commonly called the last day, or the day of judgment, is past. Our Saviour having said, 'Now is the judgment of this world,' such who are ever doing the work of the adversary, in proving one part of Revelation false by another, affirm there can be no future judgment. Those who are taught of God, pursue a different method; they study to point out the consistency of divine revelation, in order to establish its authority. The scribe instructed in the kingdom of God rightly divides the

word of truth; he clearly distinguishes between the judgment of all men, in connection with their head, where the offended divine Nature was the judge, — and, judging according to law, and eternal truth and justice, did not spare, but inflicted the threatened, deserved death, on the guilty world, so that, one dying for all, all were dead, — I say, he who is taught of God can readily distinguish between this judgment and the judgment so frequently spoken of in divine revelation as yet future. In the former judgment, the whole human family were judged; but they were gathered into one. The angelic nature is also spoken of in this judgment, but in the singular character; the 'prince of this world' is cast out. But in the future judgment, believers in Jesus Christ who have judged themselves shall not be judged. Judge yourselves, saith the Holy Spirit, and you shall not be judged; but the rest of mankind will be the subjects of this judgment when our Saviour shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them who know not God, and who obey not the gospel; and they shall then be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power; the consequence of which shall be, that they shall then be made to know God, and obey the gospel; for, although until this period they will, as unbelievers, suffer the punishment consequent on the revelation of the everlasting destruction, yet it is not said they shall be everlastingly punished with destruction. Were it possible to find a culinary fire that never could be extinguished, but which was, in the strictest sense of the word, everlasting, or eternal, should any member of your body pass through that burning flame, though but a moment of time had been spent in thus passing through, yet, even in that moment, it would suffer the pain of eternal fire. Those who build on the foundation laid in Zion, — wood, hay, stubble, — their works shall be burned in this fire, and

they, consequent thereon, shall suffer loss; but they themselves shall be saved, though it were as by fire. Were they themselves to be lost, being God's workmanship, then God would also suffer loss; but they, bad as they were, ignorant as they were of God, disobedient as they were in not obeying the gospel (and surely they must be very ignorant of God, and very disobedient to the gospel, to build with such perishable materials), — yet they, themselves, shall be saved, as it were, by that fire in which the Lord Jesus shall be revealed, when he comes to take vengeance on such characters.

"Yes, the books shall be opened, and the dead, both small and great, shall be judged out of the things written in the books. Every mouth shall be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God; and while conscious of guilt, but ignorant of a Saviour, and that the Saviour is the only wise God, who is *just, even as a Saviour*, they shall call upon the rocks and mountains to fall upon them, that they may, beneath the covert of the falling mountains, be hidden from the wrath of the Lamb. But, in this judgment, the Judge is the Saviour. Here all judgment is committed unto Jesus, because he is the Son of Man, the Son of the offending, suffering, affrighted nature. In that future day, upon which God hath appointed the judgment, it is the Prince and the Saviour who is appointed to judge the world in righteousness, even that Man whom the divine Nature ordained. Here, instead of head and members being judged together by the head of Christ, the divine Nature, the members are considered, in their distinct characters, as good and evil, or believer and unbeliever, — as children of light, or children of darkness, — and judged by their own head, for the head of every man is Christ.

"Again, the business of this judgment may be considered in some sort different from the former. *That* was

to suffer the wages of sin; *this*, after suffering the consequence of unbelief, which is the torment of fear, to stop every mouth, that the LORD alone may be exalted, and to bring every one into a state of willing obedience unto the gospel. In the former judgment sin was put away from the lost nature by the death or sacrifice of the Saviour, as the second Adam; so that God may behold the once lost and polluted nature as saved and pure in Him. The last judgment is to bring each member into the same state in themselves. Once more, as in the *former* judgment, the prince of this world, who is also called the God of this world, was cast out, in the last judgment the whole of the angelic nature who fell from their first habitation, and who are reserved in chains of darkness unto the judgment of this great day, will, in the character of goats placed on the left hand of the Shepherd of the sheep, be judged, and sent, as accursed, into the fire prepared for them. Then shall that wicked be revealed whom the LORD shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and destroy by the brightness of his coming.

"Thirdly, some persons very seriously suppose that all mankind will be on a level in the article of death. They conceive it cannot be otherwise, seeing that Jesus hath abolished death; and they believe that in the dissolution of the body the dust returns to the dust, and the spirit to God who gave it. But if Jesus, having abolished death, was sufficient to put all upon a level in death, it was sufficient to put all on a level in life also; but what is true in Christ is one thing, and what is believed true, another. Peace and reconciliation with God is the consequence of what is true in Christ Jesus. Peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost, is the consequence of what is true, as believed in our hearts. Neither in life nor in death, in the body nor out of the body, can any of the ransomed of the LORD be saved from misery until they are made acquainted with God as their Saviour;

and although in death the spirit does not descend with the body into the dust, and must be under the eye of the Father of spirits; yet where Christ is, that is, in fulness of joy, they never can be till they have peace and joy in believing. He who dies in unbelief lies down in sorrow, and will rise to the resurrection of damnation, or, more properly, condemnation. Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound; it is they, and they only, that walk in the light of God's countenance. If this was not the case, where would be the necessity of preaching the gospel at all? If, in the article of death, every one for whom Christ died were made acquainted with him, and consequently with the things that made for their peace, why trouble mankind in life about these matters? Why go forth as sheep among wolves, suffering everything that the malice of blind zeal can inflict, in order to turn men from darkness to light, if the period to which we are all hastening will effectually open the eyes of the understanding? If death destroys all distinctions, would it not be well to say, 'Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die?' 'We are commanded to preach the gospel, and this is a sufficient reason why we should preach the gospel.' Very true, but why are we commanded to preach the gospel? Is it not that faith may come by hearing, and that, living by faith on the Son of God, we may finish our course with joy? But if every one of the ransomed race are to be equally happy in death, then, although they did not live by faith, they nevertheless finish their course with joy, nor shall any individual arise to the resurrection of condemnation. This may be consolatory, but it is not Scriptural. These sectarians, aware of this error, support it by another, and therefore deny a future judgment.

"'Blessed,' saith the Holy Spirit, 'are the dead who die in the LORD; they rest from their labors.' But if all are alike in death, it may be said, 'Blessed are the dead

who die in their sin,' that is, in unbelief, 'for they rest from their labors;' but this cannot be, since it is only those who, believing the word of the gospel, put on the LORD Jesus, and having received him as their righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, so walk in him, that can be said to die in him. These, and these only, have part in the first resurrection, on whom the second death can have no power. These, in the resurrection, shall meet their Saviour with transport; they shall rise to the resurrection of salvation; they shall come to Zion with songs; they shall rejoice; while the many, who are nevertheless redeemed, yet unacquainted with the things which make for their peace, and who rise in the second resurrection, shall be filled with anguish. It is from these unhappy, despairing beings that the LORD God will wipe away all tears; it is from these benighted beings that the hand of divine benignity shall take away the veil. Those who live and die in faith shall have no tears to wipe away, no veil to remove. Tears, weeping, and wailing will continue as long as unbelief, the procuring cause, shall remain. These evils will be done away together, not in the article of death, but in the day of the LORD, when every eye shall see and every tongue shall confess to the glory of the Father.

"Fourthly, There are many who, because the Scriptures are said, and with the strictest propriety, to testify of Jesus, believe that they testify of nothing or no one else; hence, under the influence of this error, they apply to the Saviour what the Holy Spirit applies to the grand adversary. In defending these absurd notions they sometimes blaspheme the name of Jesus, and cause the way of truth to be evil spoken of. There are in this class of men some who will tell you *that Jesus Christ was the man who had not on the wedding-garment!* And was consequently cast out into utter darkness! Thus, I presume without design, they make a schism in the body

of Immanuel, they separate the BRIDEGROOM, the HEAD, the KING, from his BRIDE, his BODY, his KINGDOM; they separate what God hath joined together, although on the continuance of this union depends our life; for if we were not crucified and buried with Christ as his fulness, we shall never have a right to reign with him. There is something most horrid in fixing any character upon Christ Jesus which indicates inherent pollution; but there are among those expounders to whom we advert, who are fond of making their hearers stare and wonder at their ingenuity; alas, poor souls, the subtle deceiver is abundantly more ingenious than they themselves are, but they are not sufficiently acquainted with his devices.

"The Scriptures testify of the divine and human natures; of those natures united in *One;* of men and of angels; of good angels who never fell; of angels who kept not their first estate; of believers in Jesus Christ who glorify his name; of some who believe, but make no open profession, because they love the praise of men more than the praise of God; of wicked men who have not the knowledge of God in all their ways; and of arrogant self-righteous pharisees, who thank God they are not like other men. Among this great variety the man who is under the influence of the spirit of truth will find Jesus, as the skilful miner finds the vein of gold in the mountain.

"The Scriptures abound with striking figures calculated to give us an acquaintance with the principal characters therein, and dreadful work will he make in explaining these figures who hath not the spirit of the Saviour. The Redeemer of men is exhibited under the characters, Father, Brother, Friend, Prophet, Priest, King, Shepherd, Sheep, Lamb, Light, Life, and Peace, Bread, Wine, and Water, Fruit, Balm, and Flowers. These, and many other characters and figures by which Immanuel

has been pleased to make himself manifest, — all indicate grace, mercy, and peace.

"The adversary is represented under the character of a beast of prey, seeking to devour, a prince of darkness, a murderer, a liar, a deceiver, the accuser of the brethren, the vulture, the serpent, the goat; and when the people of God of old are said to have worshipped devils, they worshipped them in the form of goats; hence the fallen angels in the twenty-fifth of Matthew are represented under the figure of goats, while the human nature is represented under the figure of sheep. All we, like sheep, have gone astray. Under this figure of sheep there are, and will be, until the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of God and of his Christ, two characters: sheep that, hearing the voice of the Good Shepherd, follow him, and are denominated his sheep; and others who are not of this fold, who still wander in the wide waste wilderness, where there is no way. These other sheep the Shepherd and Bishop of souls must bring in, that there may be one fold under one Shepherd, that of all the Father gave him none may be lost, save the *son of perdition;* but this son of perdition was never the offspring of God; *God is not perdition.*

"Fifthly, There are many who, willing to speak peace to themselves where there is no peace, affirm that it is not sinners, but sin, that will be brought to the judgment; that it is unbelief, and not the unbeliever, that is damned; that it is the sins that are put on the left-hand in the great day, to whom the Judge is supposed to speak; but this is absolutely ludicrous. What is sin, distinct from the subject? Or how can sin, in an abstract point of view, be the subject of rebuke or punishment? Upon this principle our Saviour suffered in vain; nothing more was necessary than to have laid our sins upon the cross and made them suffer death; but every reflecting person must see and feel the absurdity of such stuff as this.

Sins are never spoken *to;* they are frequently spoken *of,* and there are some very striking figures by which they are represented, — as the tares of the field, sown by the wicked one. While the sower of the seed, as an accountable, intelligent being, is the proper subject of the judgment, the seed is spoken of as offensive, and, like other weeds, given to the devouring flame. Sometimes the iniquities of our nature are spoken of as chaff, which closely cleaves unto the grain while growing, but is finally doomed to the consuming fire. Sometimes sin is spoken of as flesh, as dead flesh, as a body of sin and death, and in this character the birds of the air are summoned to the supper of the great God, to eat the flesh of all men. Our Saviour, when explaining unto his disciples the parable of the sower, informed them that the birds of the air were the wicked ones; they are at last called to feed on the carcasses of the abominable and detestable things; but I do not recollect that in any part of divine revelation sin is spoken of in the character of an accountable being; we have already seen that there can be but two characters the proper subjects of the judgment, — angels and men; the one on the right, the other on the left hand of the Judge, who is emphatically styled the Saviour of the world.

"We have, during a series of years, been charged with propagating the above absurd and truly *ridiculous fancies.* However, I conceived this folly was found only in the mouths, for I could hardly think it was in the hearts of our calumniators to believe that there were any who held such principles. I was induced to think these falsehoods were laid to our charge in order to prejudice the public against us, for as I never conceived of such a doctrine as either *Scriptural* or *rational* myself, so I never believed any one else did. But lately I understand that this sentiment hath its advocates, and I have the mortification to learn that these advocates rank with Universalists!

Surely, surely, such teachers are not taught by the spirit that dictated to the men of God what stands recorded as divine revelation. We conceive that in this particular, at least, they are yet to learn.

"Sixthly, There is a class of Universalists, more respectable than the former, who insist that, although all mankind will finally be saved, they have much to perform, or to suffer, in order to *satisfy divine justice*, before this event can take place. All, say these Universalists, who have not a *perfection* of holiness in themselves, in the present state, — all who are not in this distempered state, pure in heart, — must, before they see God in glory, pass through a purgatorial fire, and there suffer some thousands of years, until they have paid the utmost farthing of the debt they owed the just God, according as the account stands in the book of the law; but when they have suffered, the unjust for the unjust, then they shall come forth with pure hearts, filled with fervent affection to him who graciously condescended to let them pay their own debt. These are called Universalists; and, indeed, they are Universalists, in the strictest sense of the word, for, as they do not conceive it is the blood of Jesus which cleanseth from all sin, so they imagine that the same mode of procedure which is adopted for the salvation of all men, will equally apply to fallen angels, and they therefore believe in the salvation of devils. That our Saviour passed by the nature of angels, and took upon him the seed of Abraham, makes, in the view of these Universalists, no difference; for, as mankind must, after all, suffer for their own sins, devils can do the same, and therefore be saved in the same way. What God will do with the fallen angels, after they are sent into the fire prepared for them, I know not: 'Men are the books we ought to read; the proper study of mankind is man.'

"We go no farther in our inquiries than our own

nature; so far, these Universalists accompany us, but leave us here; and we are better pleased to find them advocates for salvation in any way, than if they were laboring to prove the eternal ruin of the greater part of God's offspring. Yet we conceive these sectarians cannot, with any degree of propriety, be called Universalists on apostolic principles; nor does it appear that they have any idea of being saved *by* or *in the* LORD, with an everlasting, or with any salvation. It is difficult to know what they will have to thank God for, at last, they having *paid their own debt,* and satisfied divine justice in their own persons. I wonder not that such Universalists as these are opposed, and with success, by the partialists. Such Universalists have nothing to do with the ministry of reconciliation; the doctrine of the atonement and acceptance in the beloved, is out of their plan; such doctrines are considered by them as unfriendly to holiness; such Universalists as these are as far from the doctrines of the gospel, on one side, as their opponents are on the other. These are pharisaical Universalists, — Universalists who are willing to justify themselves; and such Universalism as this will be much more acceptable to an adulterous generation than the Universalism found in the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, *that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.* We are very much at loss to account for the suffering of Christ at all, on the plan adopted by these Universalists; he either suffered for the unjust or he did not; if he did not suffer for the unjust, he must have suffered very *unjustly, inasmuch as he did not personally deserve sufferings,* he in himself being holy, harmless, and undefiled. If he did suffer for the unjust, he either satisfied divine justice, or he did not; if he did not, then his resurrection is not our justification, nor did he put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; then he cannot be the

Saviour of the world, or of any individual in the world; nor can God be just, if he justifies the ungodly, and, of course, with respect to sinners, as their Saviour, he died in vain.

"If he did satisfy divine justice, and make reconciliation for iniquity, then this man is our peace, and we have the atonement, and God is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; then he hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, and is just, although a Saviour. The inconsistent plan adopted by this class of Universalists, is supported, like all others of the same complexion, by false views of some divine passages in the book of God. When they considered the tares and the goats as wicked men, sent into everlasting fire, to do what Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, came to do, and which, by a single word, he can and will show them he hath done, they must, of course, continue in this everlasting fire until the business be done, — until complete satisfaction be made.

"The truth is, Jesus is even now the Saviour of all men, *especially of those who believe;* all that was necessary, on God's part, for the complete salvation of all men, was finished when Jesus accomplished what the prophets prophesied of him, saying, 'He shall finish transgression; he shall make an end of sin; he shall make reconciliation for iniquities, and shall bring in everlasting righteousness.' Nothing more is now necessary, than for God to say, '*Let there be light!*' and in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, he can cause such a change to pass on his purchased possession as shall make them like unto their glorified head. Yes, by a single word, he can, by the mighty power whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself, change even these vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto his own glorious body. Why the Saviour does not do this now, I know not, any more than I know why he did not

assume our nature a thousand years sooner than he did; or why he suffers any to pass out of this state of existence, unacquainted with him as their Saviour, living all their lifetime in bondage to the fear of death. All I can, all I ought to say, is, that the Judge of all the earth does right, and will continue to do right. The ELECTION obtains, in this their day, the knowledge of the things that make for their peace, and the rest are blinded. But we rest in full assurance that the period will come when every eye shall see, when the face of the covering shall be taken from all people, and the veil from all nations; when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the LORD; when they shall all know him, from the least of them unto the greatest of them; and to know God is life eternal."

A seventh class is referred to as those who call themselves Universalists, but "as the manner of some was in the apostolic age, forsake the assembling of themselves together."

The first, second, and fourth classes of Universalists thus described, were doubtless Rellyans, who carried to an extreme, if they did not in some cases unconsciously caricature and burlesque, that system of theology. Mr. Relly, in his exaltation of intellectual faith as the chief Christian virtue, and his depreciation of moral works, certainly gave no resistance to, but seems rather to have invited, Antinomian views. It was natural that the acceptance of his main theory should have been accompanied, in some minds, with extreme notions of some of its features. A new sect always affords an open door for the entrance of unevenly balanced minds, and it must be expected that they will bring strange vagaries with them. Mr. Murray alludes, in his pub-

lished works, to conversations with such characters; and also intimates that, in various sections, he finds persons who had read the writings of Mr. Relly, and had more or less imbibed his views.[1] But, though Mr. Murray strenuously resisted the inferences which others drew from Mr. Relly's writings, it must be obvious, from his own presentation of the theory, that many of those inferences were not unnatural. Rellyanism was a fanciful scheme, throughout, and it opened the way for still wilder notions. It must be said, however, that it was not more fanciful than was the old popular theology, with its supposed allegories of the Mosaic rituals, its literal, and sometimes ludicrous, construction of numerous texts, and its wholly external and substitutional work of Christ; and that the defenders of that theology found themselves perpetually assailed by those in their own ranks who perverted, or rendered still more fanciful, the orthodoxy of that day.

As the third class which Mr. Murray mentions, — those who suppose "that all mankind will be on a level in the article of death," — he doubtless refers to Caleb Rich and his followers, as we have no account of any others, at that time, to whom this description may be supposed to apply. It is not, as will be seen by reference to what has been said of the views of Mr. Rich, a just statement of his theory, although Mr. Murray may have so understood it. In preceding pages in this chapter, a quotation from Mr. Murray's letters shows that he encountered some of this class of Universalists in Connecticut, as well as in Massachusetts. He ascribes to them views similar to those held by Richard Cop-

[1] See Letters and Sketches of Sermons, vol. ii. pp. 13, 211.

pin, of England, to whom Mr. Relly had replied. The statement made in the pamphlet we are now noticing, is substantially Mr. Relly's statement in the reply referred to.

The fifth class of Universalists, — those "who affirm that it is not sinners, but sin, that will be brought into judgment," — we know nothing of. So far as our knowledge extends, they are not mentioned, except in one instance, to be noticed farther on.

The sixth class were the Winchesterians. They were numerous at the time this pamphlet was published. Mystical interpretations of the Bible were exceedingly distasteful to them, and they had introduced what was, in the main, a more rational exegesis, which was fast supplanting, if it had not already supplanted, except in the localities where Mr. Murray was personally laboring, the peculiar theories of interpretation necessitated by the Rellyan scheme. Mr. Murray was deeply stirred by this growing change, and he elsewhere expresses himself with great bitterness, as, indeed, he was inclined to feel towards all deviations from his own theory of redemption. It was difficult for him to be just in his statements of opposing theories. He certainly has not given a fair presentation of Mr. Winchester's views.

We may suppose, without prejudice, that Mr. Murray's chief object in publishing his "Hints" was to overcome, if possible, the tendency to depart from Rellyanism; and that he has here made as clear a statement of the peculiarities of that theory as he has left us any account of. For this reason, it has historical significance, and is worthy of being preserved.

The year 1792 was a prosperous one in the rapidly growing Universalist Church. Such was the increasing interest in Boston that Mr. Murray yielded to the solicitations of his friends there, and gave one-half of his time to the supply of their pulpit. The church edifice becoming too small for the congregation, it was enlarged to twice its original size. "An excellent organ was set up," and a new hymn-book, the history and peculiarities of which will be noticed in another place, superseded the hymns of James and John Relly.

The circular letter issued by the Philadelphia Convention, in session from May 25 to 29, says: —

"We have the satisfaction to inform you that the number of churches and societies joined and united with us have increased to fifteen, exclusive of twenty-five societies that have not yet met us in convention."

Eleven churches were represented by "messengers" at that session, namely, Philadelphia, New Britain, Pike Run, Penn.; Wrightstown, Cape May, Pittsgrove, Shiloh, Kingwood, N. J.; Georges Hills, Md.; Drummond Town, Morgantown, Va. The Pike Run, Georges Hills, and Morgantown churches, situated a long distance west of Philadelphia, asked to be set off in a convention by themselves, and their request was granted. A similar request was made by the Boston Church, as follows: —

"As there appears to be a great improbability that your Annual Conventions will ever be attended by as many delegates from the four New England States as there are or may be churches, by reason of the lengthy way to so remote a part, and the great poverty of infant

societies, who will long be without funds, it has therefore been thought advisable that a Convention should be holden in some central part of the four New England States, and that all the churches and societies in these States and Vermont [probably New York is meant] might be invited to attend. This Convention, if holden in the fall, would present an opportunity to you of receiving accounts therefrom in the spring; and your letters in *May* might be forwarded to us for consideration at the *September* meeting; and our doings of *September* transmitted for your consideration at the *May* Convention. Thus a continual exchange of knowledge, or counsel, would take place; and whilst from you we became acquainted with the state of the churches beyond Philadelphia, the brethren at Philadelphia and to the southward would be certified by us of the standing of the churches in these parts. Should it seem meet unto you, dearly beloved, that the within be attended to, and that beneficial effects would result therefrom, we should be pleased with receiving a few lines confirming us in the sentiments thus expressed."

The Convention appointed a committee to reply, and their answer was approved during the session: —

"Your information of a proposal of forming a Convention in your parts meets our hearty approbation, upon the full assurance of continuing such a mutual connection as you mention. And perhaps it may be best to have a general meeting of delegates from the several Conventions that may be established in some future period. And we are happy to tell you of a similar request of forming a Convention in the West."

The significance of this request, or proposal, and the answer to it, in connection with the fact that the Asso-

ciation formed at Oxford in 1785 had ceased to exist, will be apparent. If the Universalists of Massachusetts had kept the old organization alive, there would have been no occasion to suggest the forming of a new one.

A new minister, Abel Sarjent, pastor of the three western churches, was in attendance at this session. Unfortunately, we know very little concerning him. The letter from the Pike Run church said: —

"Our beloved brother, Abel Sarjent, who has faithfully labored these four years in this country, is now, we expect, about to leave us, and we have no room to say aught against it, for he has faithfully labored these four years, and in this country has been instrumental in convincing very many; and we may say it has been chiefly upon his own charges, and he is now thereby so reduced that he is in a likely way to be distressed by the law for want of cash to defray his necessary charges in life, and we cannot help him because it is impossible to obtain cash in this country."

When Mr. Sarjent began to preach, we have not been able to ascertain. He was a man of keen mind, good acquirements, an original thinker, as we shall presently see, and of great industry. The letter of the church of Georges Hills also spoke of Mr. Sarjent as

"a man who has to our knowledge exposed himself now for a long time to uncommon difficulties in the labors of the gospel and for the name of Jesus Christ our Lord; and though he has been often reproached on that account, yet by a due and strict examination we have found the reports to be false in respect of his reproach, and him fully worthy of his place and standing with us (accord-

ing to the word of God) as a member in full communion and good standing in our church, and also as our pastor."

The vexatious questions of divine sovereignty and free will were thrust upon the Convention by this Maryland church in the following portion of their letter: —

"We have lately passed an act in our church that any member holding that all things that come to pass were irrevocably decreed so of God, and therefore nothing coming to pass is contrary to, or a transgression of, the will of Deity, but everything is consistent with his will that does come to pass, shall not be held in fellowship. And the church unanimously and cheerfully voted that no such member ought by any means to be held in fellowship or his standing be retained in the church; for we conceive that the harboring of such a sentiment or doctrine in a church tends in every way to the dishonor of the church and cause they profess, and is destructive of the order of Christ; for if every transgression is consistent with the decrees, or order, or will of the Deity, then of consequence the commands must be inconsistent with the decrees, or order, or will of the Deity, and the commands and orders of God to us as individuals are rendered void, and every transgression and disorder justified.

"In consequence of the above, we have thought proper to propose the following queries to you: A conformity to the decrees of God must be conformity to the order of God, and how can a due subjection and conformity to the order of God be reprovable? Is not a reproof a manifestation of disapprobation? And will God disapprove of the due execution of his own order or decrees? How can this be called transgression or disobedience, when all has been done exactly agreeable or consistent with the will

of the Deity, except God command us to act contrary to his will? We beseech you, brethren, to send us a full answer to this epistle, especially to the above queries."

Revs. Artis Seagrave and Nicholas Cox were instructed to prepare an answer, which they reported to the Convention on Monday morning. The records show that it was "read by paragraph, and approved," the whole of the morning session being given to the consideration of it. The copy retained by the Convention is as follows: —

"In Convention, Philadelphia, May 27, 1792.

"*Dear Brethren and Fellow-Heirs in the Salvation of Jesus,* — We received your letter by Brother Sarjent, and rejoice to hear that God has inclined your hearts to believe the gospel, and openly profess the Universal Saviour; but lament, at the same time, to hear that there is any animosity or division like to take place among you or any of the dear brethren in your part of the world respecting speculative points in doctrine; and unfeignedly lament that you have made any decree in your church either to exclude any, or refuse to receive any, merely on account of their sentiment respecting their ideas of the purposes or decrees of God, — these things being beyond the full comprehension of you or us while we see through a glass darkly. These same different opinions have made great confusion and disorder in many societies for ages, and we never find that they had any good tendency. And we do not wonder that men should quarrel and anathematize one another for sentiment, while they believed that the love of God depended on the belief of the creature; but for those who believe as you and we do, that the love of God in Christ Jesus is yea and amen; and that his love to us does not depend on our belief of any theory, but that our knowledge of his love

to us in Jesus, and that antecedent to our belief, is the cause of our happiness, our love to God, and union with one another in one common Saviour; and that in proportion to our light or evidence of the truth is our faith, and consequently our joy in the Lord, — for us to refuse or exclude any of our fellow-heirs and blood-bought purchase of the Lamb, while they profess to love God, and do not in works deny him, but differ from us in some ideas of the purposes of God, we humbly conceive is contrary to the principles of universal love we profess, and the examples of our dear Head and Master, who reproved the disciples for forbidding any merely because they did not exactly follow them.

"These things, dear brethren, were considered when many of us first met in convention to consult on some plan of articles of faith and church government. We met with different ideas; many of us believed, and still believe, the sentiments for which you condemn your brethren, according to the act of the church mentioned by you, — though not expressed in the same words, perhaps, as you have used to express your abhorrence of them by; and some of us are in sentiment opposed to these ideas, but we are far from believing that either sentiment ought to exclude any from union in the church. We agreed to disagree in these things, to think and let think according to the measure of light given to us, without censuring one another for said sentiment.

"You have requested us to decide on the sentiments you spoke of in your letter; but, dear brethren, we do not think it our province as a Convention to decide on any such sentiments, or attempt to establish any rule of orthodoxy. This prerogative, we think, belongs only to our Master. All of us are brethren, and have no right to lord it over God's heritage. We are short-sighted, weak, fallible, and partial creatures; and who are we

that we should judge another man's servant? We are not the judge of the quick, nor of the dead; we do not, therefore, choose to judge, lest we be judged, and that justly, too, for our ignorant and partial judgment; and were we to contend in Convention about the sentiments you mention in your letter, what would be the consequence? — or even about many other ideas? as, perhaps, not two can think alike in all things. Why, the consequence would be to divide, differ, and finally destroy our fellowship as a Convention; and perhaps spread the disorder through the churches we represent, and instead of building one another up in the essential point, to wit, faith in Jesus, the Saviour of men, we should go on contending who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven!

"You, dear brethren, have, by sending a letter desiring to join, and be received into, the Convention, professed union and a desire of fellowship with the churches that compose this Convention, as you have adopted the Articles of Faith and Plan of Church Government set forth May 25, 1790. These Articles do not require a member of the church to believe or disbelieve the sentiments you have condemned by the act of your church, neither does the form of church government authorize a church to exclude any member believing in Jesus, for anything but acting contrary to good moral character, and departing from our Articles of Faith. Yet, by the act of your church, though we joyfully receive you, some of us, and perhaps the greatest part of us, must be denied communion with you, on the supposition that our sentiments may sometimes lead us to vice! Has not this been the pretext for all religious persecution in the anti-Christian world? But may the Lord grant that each of us, dear brethren, that have named the name of the Lord as the Saviour of the world, may depart from this iniquity, and try to live godly in Christ Jesus, though

those that do not yet know the truth may say of us, as they did of Paul, we destroy the law by our faith.

"And, dearly beloved and longed for in the Lord, permit us as fellow-heirs with you, not to command you, but entreat you, to consider that the sentiments you have mentioned with such abhorrence ought not to be a bar to Christian fellowship in the Church of Christ. And we hope you will so consider it, and not let your law be like that of the Medes and Persians. Let him that cannot bear strong meat have the liberty of eating herbs, and they that are too young to digest herbs, eat milk. And whether you eat or drink, do all to the glory of God, and try to exercise that charity in Jesus that suffereth long and is kind, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, rejoiceth not in iniquity, thinketh no evil, but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, hopeth all things, believeth all things, and never faileth. Try in all things to cultivate a spirit of love and union among yourselves; let the *strong* bear the infirmities of the weak."

The following letter, written by the Moderator of the Convention, shows that the doctrine of no future punishment was already advocated in some of the churches, and, with other differences, was creating divisions:—

"PHILADELPHIA, May 27, 1792.

"*Dear Brethren in belief of the restoration of all things:*

Unknown to any of you personally, and perhaps unheard of, yet to as many as see this and who love the Lord Jesus Christ, greeting:

"By our brother Sarjent, who is received by the Convention now met in this place, as the messenger from three different churches in your parts, we are informed, and do lament to hear, that there is discord among you who have embraced this great truth. And although an apostle says (1 Cor. xi. 19), '*For there must be also here-*

sies among you,' etc., yet we would hope better things of you. Do not rend the body of Jesus, '*for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones*' (Eph. vi. 30). '*But the body is not one member, but many. Let not the foot say, Because I am not the hand I am not of the body.*'

"As an individual I address you, and, according to information, find you are not divided about the extent of salvation, but with respect to the mode of it. True, indeed, within my own knowledge I find those who have embraced this glorious truth much divided in this matter. But with us we are happy enough to find that these divisions tend more to cement than to separate us; for by this we learn forbearance, brotherly kindness, charity. You need not exercise forbearance or charity towards those who think in all respects with you. I see quite as much difference in the explanation of the mode of salvation with those who have embraced this doctrine, as there appears among other sects of contending Christians who have agreed in this, namely, that but a small part of mankind will be saved. But shall we take them for our example with respect to contention ending in divisions? God forbid. Yea, rather let us set them an example of forbearance, and constrain them to say, See how Universalists love one another.

"Quarrel no more about the decrees and foreknowledge of God, our common Father. They amount to the same in the breasts of the different parties that hold them. And never let me fix my conclusions to my brother's premises. He can and doth reconcile them to himself. 'With his own Master, he stands or falls.' And blessed be his Master, we may add, 'he shall stand; for God is able to hold him up.' Again, we find that those disputes too often engender wrath and misrepresentations even of our own sentiments; for it is almost the invariable consequence of flying from one extreme to fall into the

other. Hence the different opinions, — such as an endless hell of misery, or no hell at all in a future state; or a hell of punishment considered as a place of atonement, — all which I conceive to be equally wrong. Surely, we may safely say that he who '*believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.*' But as all have been in a state of unbelief, '*this* shall not see life,' etc., must only mean, while under this state; and as '*God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy on all,*' and as believing surely gives us a manifestation of this mercy, as many as die without such knowledge must come to it in another state or dispensation, or be deprived of it time without end. You do not believe that death itself will give them *such* a manifestation; and as the consequence of this ignorance is pain and misery, we know this must await them till such a manifestation takes place. As for the degree or duration of this blindness and misery, we are not able to say; but know it must end in the time of the restitution of all things. And therefore we cannot, from divine record, believe in what is called an endless hell; nor can we believe that the chastisement, suffering, or whatever called, we may endure in a future state or dispensation, can make any atonement or compensation for the offence we have committed. *This belongs to our great sacrifice,* and that only.

"Again, I beg, do not divide, wrangle, and destroy one another with doubtful words of disputation. But him that is weak in the faith receive ye. Do not cast him out, but receive him. What shall I say more? Shall I tell you that I not only believe that these jarring sentiments do and will disturb every religious society engaged to know the truth, but also there is a sample of them in every man's own mind, as an individual who is in pursuit of salvation? And if this is so, it ought to make

us bear with one another. Again, I say, do not rend the body of Jesus, nor weaken a single member of it. Remember that you are watched on all hands. Be therefore as a city set on a hill, not ashamed to be seen at noonday, and let others so see your good works as to be constrained to glorify your Father who is in heaven. And the most essential good work you can do is to love and assist one another.

"From your brother in belief of the truth,

"JAMES MOORE.

"*To the divided brothers at Pike Run, Washington County, Pennsylvania.*"

The Church at Boston gave the following statement in regard to the condition of the cause at the eastward: —

"*The Church at Boston* consists of nearly *eighty members,* who have signed the Articles of Faith, and uniting compact, having fellowship with each other in the belief of the truth, and the order of the gospel. Very many of these, both men and women, see it consistent with their profession to present the fruit of their loins in dedication to the Everlasting Father; and also to break bread in remembrance of the Lord Jesus, with singleness of eye, and a thankful heart. There are others who, having, as they judge, passed beyond all shadows, and laid hold of the substance, look with indifference upon the things that are seen. A spirit of harmony, however, prevails between both, and he that regardeth and he that regardeth not, avoid judgment each of the other, remembering that to their own Master they stand or fall. In addition to these, we may speak of three or four times the number already mentioned, who usually worship with us, and lend a patient and open ear to the glad tidings of great joy. In a few words, the Society increaseth by the good pleasure of

our God; and we hope and trust that they may show themselves temperate in all things, and be a pattern unto believers.

"*The Society at Gloucester, Cape Ann,* hath been gradually lessening by deaths; and many young people have intermarried among other churches, and sat down beneath the shadow of another ministry. The situation of our brethren in this town, which is not at present so lovely in prospect as heretofore, may also possibly have arisen, in part, from their being destitute of the preached word for one half of the year, consequent on which, some have forsook the assembling of themselves together at these intermediate seasons, and, instead of progressing in knowledge and love, have rather lapsed into a state of lukewarmness. These remarks, it is but candid to observe, do not apply to the whole of that Society. There are those whose lamps are trimmed, in whose vessels are oil, and whose lights shine before men to the glory of their Heavenly Father. Neither do we, dearly beloved, mention the above in a spirit of censure. For them, the beginning of our strength in the gospel, — for them, a kind of first-fruits unto God of his workmanship in this land, we feel sorrow and heaviness of heart, lest any, having run well, should now be hindered. And if there are any consolations in Christ, — comfort of love, or fellowship of the Spirit, — fulfil ye, then, we beseech you, our joy; look on these, the things of others, and may their hearts receive the brotherly word of exhortation, in due season.

"At *Attleborough,* Massachusetts, there is a small society, collected from that and the adjacent towns. As yet, we have received no accounts of their walk with each other, or what confession of faith they hold to. But, by report from Brother Richards, who abode with them one day and a night, they are come out, and come in, from real principle.

"In *Milford,* Massachusetts, there are many professors. These have had it in contemplation to build a meeting-house; but we rather think it will be a late date before it is accomplished. The brethren in this place are averse to system, and generally walk as it seemeth right unto every man.

"At *Bellingham, Grafton,* and some other places, such as *Oxford,* etc., the word is preached once a month. Numbers attend on these occasions, and declare themselves well pleased; but there is no society, upon a regular basis, if we except Oxford.

"*Warwick, Egremont, Hardwick,* and *Petersham,* contain several warm friends to the cause. They have come into order in several of these towns, and have not only profession, but also possession.

"In the State of *New Hampshire,* the brethren are and have been much scattered. The death of our Brother Parker, which we trust was life unto him in the Lord, left the brethren at Portsmouth without any visible help in teaching. Some attempts were made to supply his place. The watchmen watched, the builders labored, but in vain. Not long since, our elder, Mr. Murray, visited the society, and they appeared well-disposed to unite together, if it was only once in three months that they could hear the good report. We hope that the bands of their union may be strengthened, and their hearts knit together.

"*Rhode Island* has but a few who profess the Universal love of God to man. Of these, the brethren in Providence assemble part of the First day in a private house, and the other part of the day they tarry at home, or worship elsewhere. Those that are at Newport, join neither with the world nor with each other. They are afraid of months, of days, and of years; and, to avoid being entangled with what they deem a yoke of bondage, they keep from even the appearance of

assembling at any time. Brethren! these things ought not to be so!

"*Vermont.* By recent accounts therefrom, the wilderness blossoms with the Rose of Sharon. The truth of the gospel spreads far and wide in those parts, and the oracles of reason are being daily exchanged for the lively oracles of the living God.

"*Connecticut,* as Brother Barns informs us, is renouncing early-imbibed prejudices, for late-discovered truths. The meeting-houses are very generally opened to our speakers, and the spirit of opposition declines apace.

"*New York,* or rather the interior parts of that State, are beholding more and more of the light that shall increase unto the perfect day; and many rejoice in the healing rays of the Sun of Righteousness.

"This faithful portrait, dearly beloved, hath its bright and pleasing, its dark and painful, colorings. The 'cloud and the pillar of fire,' were the attendants of Israel, until they entered the land of promise. They remain unto this day."

In New Jersey, legal difficulties disturbed some of the churches. At Kingwood, the Universalists had a severe struggle for the possession of their house of worship, the minority of a former Baptist Society being determined to take the whole, without allowing them any compensation for their share. In 1791, they reported to the Convention that a committee of mutual friends had settled the difficulty; but in 1792, they had to report this condition of things: —

"Our opponents have frequently locked the meeting-house against us, and as often some of our people have opened it. Now they have gone so far as to get out a State warrant for four of our people, and took them

before three Justices, who, although they were our enemies, allowed adjournment, in order, as we thought, to bring forward our evidences; but when they appeared, they would not hear them, but bound over two of the four to the February Court; the other two they discharged. The Grand Jury sat, but found no bill against them; but because our opponents plead that their principal evidence could not come, one of them was discharged; the other continued under his recognizance till the May term. There being then no Grand Jury, our attorney plead that it was unreasonable that a person who was charged with breaking open a meeting-house should be bound any longer; whereupon he was discharged. What effect this may have upon our enemies, we know not, — only that they gave us no trouble last Sunday, for we met in peace, thanks to the Lord."

In September, Rev. Abel Sarjent was in Baltimore where he published the following: —

"*Various Questions to the Teachers in Israel:*

"As I was passing through the streets of Baltimore, in deep meditation, beholding the great activity of many shining gentlemen, as well as those of the fairer sex, — especially those in the bloom of life, — I was led into the following queries, which I humbly request some teachers in Israel (that may find themselves capable) to answer: —

"We know that a wise master-builder, when he is about to perform any building, is fixed in his intention *what* to perform; the *plan* by which to bring about the performance *is devised;* and the first stroke that he strikes is expressive, not only of the builder's *design,* but, also, that he *intends* and *expects* to bring this design *to be fully effected,* and, therefore, *makes the attempt* to

execute the same; and the *first* stroke that he strikes *is the attempt.*

"If he be a wise builder, he will not make the attempt till he has first set down and well considered the cost, and every obstruction that may come within his knowledge to prevent the accomplishment of the desired effect; lest, after he has attempted, if he should fail, all that behold him begin to mock, saying, 'This man began to build, and was not able to finish.' (Luke xiv. 27–33.)

"I. Must not God, who is the Builder of all creation, in creating such noble beings, which are superior to all the rest of his lower creation, have had some particular and grand design concerning the final state of those beings?

"II. Is it possible for any being inferior to God, by freedom of will or anything else, to prevent the effecting of that which God intended to effect? No doubt, many may oppose, and thereby involve themselves in ten thousand sorrows; but is it possible for God finally to fail, or to have any of his intentions frustrated?

"III. Is God, who is infinite in knowledge, capable of a succession of ideas?

"IV. Was it essential to God to hate a part of his creatures (that is, if there be such a thing, as some say there is), or did sin — that mean production of the devil — produce such a disposition in God, and so cause him to act towards some of his creatures in a way contrary to what he essentially intended?

"V. If the devil's design, in introducing sin into the world, was to ruin a part, or the whole, of mankind, which God originally designed for happiness, and the devil's design should be effected in any wise, will it not thence necessarily follow, that the devil has manifested himself more powerful in effecting *his* designs, than what God has in effecting *his?* And if, in consequence of this, God should become an enemy to some to whom he

was once a friend, will it not follow, that the devil, by introducing sin into the world, has produced a change of disposition in God towards some of his creatures, while the devil himself remains unchangeably the same in disposition that he was from the beginning [of his existence *as* a devil]?

"VI. If it be a truth that there is a part of mankind for whom Christ did not die, can it be the duty of that part to believe that Jesus is their true and full Saviour? And if they were to believe it to be a truth, that Christ did not die for them, could that belief make them happy [or save them from endless woe]?

"VII. If God's word shall accomplish that which he pleases, and prosper in that whereto it was sent (Isaiah lv. 8–12), and God pleases that all should obey and believe the truths therein contained, and his word was sent *to accomplish that pleasure*, what must be the *final result?*

"A Universal Friend to Mankind."

Some mechanics in McAllister's town (now Hanover), York County, Penn., became interested in these questions, and caused them to be translated into German, and circulated in that place, where they attracted so much notice as to create a controversy, in anonymous letters, signed: "A Friend to Sound Reason and Revelation," "An Inhabitant of Hanover," "Friends to the Restitution." The first and last signatures are said to have been used by some of the mechanics, and the other was employed by the Lutheran clergyman, in opposition to Universalism. The latter lost his temper, and became so abusive that the mechanics refused to continue the debate, unless he would confine himself to decent language and sound reason. The letters were afterwards published in pamphlet form, in the German lan-

guage, by the "Friends of the Restitution," prefaced, in English and German, by the questions which prompted the discussion.

In 1793, the attendance at the Convention was not as large as in 1792; but two new churches were received into fellowship,— one "in Hartford County, near Havre de Grace, Md.," and one "lately constituted in Burlington County, N. J., near Jacobstown, and known by the name of New Hanover." Of the first, we have no further information. The latter was a small organization, the leading spirits in which were John Brown and his wife Alice, especially the latter, who was a very intelligent and zealous woman, the daughter of Rev. John Coward, a distinguished Baptist preacher of that part of New Jersey. Mr. Brown was a man of business, and probably of some means, as he donated to the church an acre of land for a meeting-house, and a free burial-ground. Alice Brown was a liberal contributor towards building the house of worship, and had almost the entire charge of its erection. In 1793, Rev. Abel Sarjent was the pastor of this church, but he did not remain long with them; and they seem never to have had a settled minister again. Empson Kirby was an elder in the church, and was thereafter their constant messenger to the Convention. At one time they reported to the Convention: —

"Though we are few, we endeavor to keep up our meetings, mindful of the blessed promise of our Lord, who says that, 'where two or three are met in his name, there he will be in the midst;' and we do think that we find the promise fulfilled at times; but we wish you to visit us as often as any of you can find it convenient.

We have not had a Universalist minister with us for almost a year."

Another year they say: "We have had several join us since the last Convention, and believe we should have more if we were favored with preaching." [1]

The Boston church reported increased prosperity, saying: "Since the assembling of yourselves together, at the last annual meeting, we have been greatly enlarged." The Convention responded: —

"Our hearts were greatly refreshed by the good news your letter brought us, of the more general spread of the glorious gospel in your parts. And we have no doubt you will be glad when we tell you, it is more so here than has been heretofore. It is certain that truth is spreading in various parts, and there are so many calls for preaching that it is impossible for the few preachers we have among us to supply them."

The church in Philadelphia had changed their place of meeting, and were holding services in the Anatomical Hall, Fifth street, between Chestnut and Walnut streets. Rev. Hugh White, who was also a school teacher, was their minister, and one of their representatives to this session of the Convention. Nothing more is known of him than that he died later in the summer, of yellow fever. Major James Moore, also, died with the fever, the same season. The church, shortly after the meeting of the Convention, purchased a lot on Lombard street, above Fourth street. This street was at that time being built up with residences for merchants, and other men of affluence, and the expectation was that it

[1] See A Century of Universalism, pp. 189–199.

would continue to be the fashionable street of the city. Here the church began to build; but the appearance and spread of the yellow fever operated, with other causes, to weaken and cripple it, and the building was but partially finished for several years.

In June of this year (1793), Rev. Abel Sarjent issued the first number of "The Free Universal Magazine," of which we shall speak more fully in another place. It is mentioned here for the purpose of calling attention to the fact that, at that early date, Universalism was held and advocated on a Unitarian basis. The Magazine publishes, with commendation, a lengthy Creed, "adopted by some of our churches, and presented to the consideration of others."

Its first article reads: —

"We believe that there is one God, and that there is none other but he; that there is but one person in the Godhead, and that the fulness of Godhead is included in this one character, FATHER; that God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable. In his Being, love, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. A Being who acts, in all he does, entirely from his own Essence, independent of cause or motive by him seen in any of the actions of creatures to excite or move him thereunto." [1]

There are some mystical passages in these Articles of Faith, but Christ is clearly spoken of as "the Son of God, the first and greatest intelligence that was ever produced, or brought forth, by the infinite love, wisdom, and power of the invisible Deity."

[1] The Creed, in full, may be found in the Universalist Quarterly, January, 1878.

Provision was made, in these Articles, for the establishment of free religious inquiring societies, which should be conducted under the direction of the Church; and the same number of the Magazine contains a series of

"Queries Proposed and Answered at the Opening of the Free Religious Enquiring Society, under the Direction of the Free Universal Church of Christ, at New Hanover, in Burlington County, N. J., — with a few more added: —

"*Question.* — What is life?

"*Answer.* — Life is that certain power, order, and consciousness, from whence all action, sensation, and intelligence is derived; and that life is God, and was made manifest in the flesh of Jesus Christ.

"*Q.* — What is death?

"*A.* — Death is an extinction of the *enjoyment of*, and *communion with*, life. Death is not a cause, or producer of an effect; but it is merely an effect, entirely empty and fruitless; derived from a cause which, of course, must of necessity cease to exist, when the cause upon which its existence depends is removed.

"*Q.* — What is the cause upon which the existence of death depends?

"*A.* — The cause upon which the existence of death depends is a deviation from order, which is transgression; by *this*, man was involved in disorder, and fell into darkness; and so the whole nature of man sunk into confusion, and thereby lost immortality, which *could not* be enjoyed *out of* order; so man became subjected to ruin, and to a return to dust again, from whence he was taken.

"*Q.* — What is the resurrection?

"*A.* — The resurrection is a re-partaking of immortality, or the being brought into a re-communion with

immortality (which is God), which never can be enjoyed by any but in that order which God at first ordained for that purpose; because God cannot violate his own order, nor depart from it to establish order; God cannot go out of his own order to bring any that have deviated from it back into order again.

"*Q.* — What is condemnation?

"*A.* — Condemnation is the sentence of a violated law (or order) in the conscience against the violator; which forbids the violator's peace and rest; which distress cannot be removed but by the violator's obtaining a righteousness which the same law violated will approve of.

"*Q.* — How are we to understand the words 'forever,' 'forever and ever,' and 'everlasting,' etc.?

"*A.* — We can understand these words no other way than that they are expressive of undetermined periods; because it is evident from many places in Scripture that these words are expressive, sometimes of a longer, and sometimes of a shorter, duration of time (see Genesis xvii. 8; Exodus xii. 14, 17; Numbers x. 8; 2 Samuel vii. 16; Exodus xl. 15; Jonah ii. 6; Exodus xxi. 6). There is but one rule given in Scripture, whereby we may understand or ascertain the meaning of these expressions, or the duration of time expressed by them; and that rule is the following, namely, by the nature of the objects unto which those expressions are applied; for instance, in Jonah ii. 6, the word *forever* is applied to the earth with her bars being about Jonah in the past tense; now the nature of this object unto which the word *forever* is here applied was such that we know, from divine testimony, that it did not exist any longer than three days and three nights; the word *forever*, therefore, in this instance, could be expressive of no longer duration than three days and three nights.

"Again, in Exodus xxi. 6. Here the object unto which

the same word is applied is the servitude of the servant to his temporal master; and the nature of this object is such, we do assuredly know, that it could not exist any longer than the servant's lifetime. The word 'forever,' therefore, in this instance, could not be expressive of any longer duration than the servant's lifetime.

"Again, Exodus xl. 15 (everlasting priesthood). Here the object unto which the word 'everlasting' is applied is not a priesthood that is made after the power of an endless life (Heb. vii. 16), but to one that is made after the law of a carnal commandment, and was to continue no longer than throughout their generations. The word 'everlasting,' therefore, in this instance, could not be expressive of any longer duration than the continuance of the existence of that priesthood.

"Again, Gen. xvii. 8. Here the word 'everlasting' is applied to the time of Israel's possessing the land of Canaan. Therefore, the word 'everlasting,' in this instance, could not be expressive of any longer duration than the time that the children of Israel were to continue to possess the temporal land of Canaan; as all must grant that *that* was the object unto which the word was applied.

"From the remarks already made, it is too evident to be denied that the words 'forever,' and 'everlasting,' etc., are to be understood by the objects unto which they are applied, and are never expressive of any longer duration than the existence of those objects; some of which are longer, and some shorter, as has been shown. As to the words 'forever and ever,' they are allowed, by almost all, to be related to those already mentioned, and therefore are to be understood in the like manner.

"When these expressions are applied to the life of the saints, they are expressive of endless duration, because the object unto which, in this case, the words are applied, is of that nature that it must necessarily exist without

end; hence it is called an endless life. (See Heb. vii. 16.) But when the same words are applied to the death of the wicked, they are expressive of a limited and timely duration; because, in this case, these words are applied to an object [death] which divine testimony assures us cannot exist without end, or always, but will be destroyed, and, therefore, will cease to exist. So says the Apostle (1 Cor. xv. 26–54), and so saith the divine Revelation (xxi. 4). *And there shall be no more death.*

"In the Word of God, we are informed of an endless life, but not of an endless death. By the same Word, we are informed of a coming period when there shall be no more death; but not when there shall be no more life. But as God *is life*, and is able to triumph victoriously over all that stands in opposition to him, so life will triumph gloriously over death, to the subduing of its power, and bringing it perfectly to naught.

"When the words 'everlasting,' and 'forever,' are applied to the joys and triumphs of the saints, they are to be understood expressive of endless duration, because the object unto which they are applied [namely, the triumphs and joys of the saints], divine testimony assures us, will continue to exist, world without end. [Isaiah xlv. 17: *But Israel shall be saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed, nor confounded, world without end.*] But when those expressions are applied to the blindness, shame, and miseries of the wicked, they are to be understood as expressive of a limited duration, and of no longer duration than the existence of the objects unto which they are applied, which, divine testimony assures us, must sooner or later cease to exist. [See Rev. xxi. 4; 1 Cor. xv. 28: *And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain*, but *God shall be* ALL IN ALL. Isaiah xxv. 7, 8: *And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and*

the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces, etc.]

"Hence, from the Word, we are taught to believe that the righteous shall never be ashamed, world without end; but we are not thereby informed that any shall be ashamed, or blind, or wretched, or miserable, world without end. We also are by the Word informed that there is a period before us promised, when there shall be no more sorrow, crying, nor pain, — but not when there shall be no more joy, pleasure and happiness; but we are well assured by the sacred records, that the latter shall be continued in endless existence, by the continuance of the existence of its cause, namely, life and order, with him that has the power of it; while the existence of the former shall be discontinued, by a total destruction of the existence of its cause, namely, sin and disorder, with him that has the power of it; so death shall be destroyed out of existence, with him that has the power of death. Amen."

Evidently, this was a period of great freedom in the investigation and expression of opinions in the Universalist ranks, not only within the territorial limits represented in the Convention, but far beyond; and at times it threatened division and alienation among the believers. A few extracts from the pages of "The Free Universal Magazine," will show the extent and character of these investigations.

In advocacy of the doctrine of intense future punishment, Christopher Marshall, who furnished several articles for the Magazine, thus wrote: —

"Sin is of such a horrid and tormenting nature, that there shall be indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man which doeth evil, both

Jew and Gentile (Rom. ii. 9); and that to such a degree, that many will not only wish they had never been born, nor seen the light of the sun, but will even gnaw their tongues with pain, and curse their God, and their king, and look upwards. Nevertheless, after this dark and horrid night of Aionion torments, they will, by the blood of the everlasting Covenant, be sent forth out of that pit wherein is no water. They shall hear the voice of the Lord reproving them, as Job did, and will clothe themselves with as manifold and greater humility than he (Job xlii. 2, 6), as their torments were severer."

The author of the above was an avowed and active Universalist, although never connected with a Universalist church, or congregation. He was born a Quaker, in 1709, and was expelled from their Society at the commencement of the Revolution, for maintaining the lawfulness of defensive war. Having at this period accumulated quite a fortune, he retired from business, and gave himself, with great ardor, to the support of the American cause; and was "on friendly and confidential terms with many of the leading men in the Continental Congress, and the new government of Pennsylvania." His attention was probably directed to Universalism by the perusal of Siegvolk's "Everlasting Gospel," which he greatly admired, and generously distributed copies of it to eminent men who enjoyed his friendship. In his diary for May 9, 1775, he thus mentions the result of one of these gifts: —

"Christopher Gadsden [member of Congress from South Carolina] came to see me, and dined with me. In conversation, he expressed the great satisfaction he had derived in reading some of the books he had re-

ceived from me, when he last went home to Carolina from this city, particularly Paul Siegvolk's book, entitled 'The Everlasting Gospel,' and those two books entitled 'The World Unmasked, or The Philosopher the Greatest Cheat,' requesting that if it should please God that he and I should live to see peace and harmony once more restored among us in these parts, I would promote a correction of 'The Everlasting Gospel,' and have it, with the two other volumes of the 'World Unmasked,' fairly and neatly printed, unto which he would subscribe largely, and, upon completing them, I might draw on him to the amount of sixty guineas, which he would immediately pay. This conversation gave me great pleasure."

Nearly a year later he makes this entry : —

"March 18, 1776. After dinner went down to Samuel and John Adams' lodgings; not at home. I left there with the maid the works of George Stonehouse, neatly bound and lettered, namely, 'Universal Restitution,' 'Scripture Doctrine,' 'Universal Restitution Further Defended,' and 'Christ's Temptations Real Facts,' etc., as a present."

During Mr. and Mrs. Murray's visit to Philadelphia in the summer of 1790, they were for a while the guests of Mr. Marshall, and Mrs. Murray writes with great enthusiasm of his library, and of his manuscripts which she perused. He died in 1797, having executed his will a year before, in which he made an explicit declaration of his faith that Christ "will, in the ages to come, 'put an end to sin, finish transgression, and bring in everlasting righteousness' unto all lapsed beings, as it stands recorded in the Scriptures."

Another correspondent of the Magazine, Rev. J. Bailey, of Kentucky, thus alludes to several differences of opinion, and among them to denial of future punishment: —

"I am sorry to hear that there is any likelihood of a jar amongst the few witnesses for God's universal love at this time especially, as they are under the united frowns of all other Christian societies; and the declarative interest of Christ and his everlasting gospel much depends upon their unity.

"Though I confess that Calvinism, as it relates to the decrees of election and reprobation, appears to me to be replete with blasphemy, inasmuch as it makes the blessed and adorable God the author of all wickedness; nevertheless we ought to exercise great tenderness towards those brethren who hold with election in the universal system, provided they keep up the idea of the future dispensations of Christ, in the distribution of rewards and punishments, till the close of the mediatory office of Christ, when God shall be All in All.

"Those who hold the salvation of all men, exclusive of the future dispensations of Christ in the distribution of rewards and punishments (if there be any such), upon the most charitable conclusion, I humbly conceive they are not aware how near they are bordering on gross deism, and an implicit, if not a wilful, denial of the sacred Scriptures; and hope they will see that *that* part of their principles is a moth in their system, and will become a check to the progress of the truth, inasmuch as it stands in direct opposition to such a number of plain and unequivocal texts that pronounce future punishment upon those who die impenitent, which have as good a right to compose a part of our creed as the most gracious promises.

"But I need not enlarge upon this subject. I see you

have discovered the deformity of Calvinism, and am happy that you have entered your protest against it. It is an error that I have long since contested in the regular Baptist and Presbyterian societies, and have often declared myself an adversary to it, both in public and private; and from report have greatly feared what you have said in your little book, — 'that there would be a division in the Universalist Society on account of it;' knowing that whenever a Universalist imbibes Calvinism, and especially if he denies a state of rewards and punishments after death, it amounts fully to Antinomianism."

Of the writer of the above little is known, except what he communicated to the Magazine June 16, 1793. Writing from "Lincoln County, Kentucky, Rush Branch Meeting-house," he said: —

"It is now about nineteen months since we (William Bledsoe and myself) were expelled from our former society (the Separate Baptists) for the belief of the final restoration of all things to a union with, and enjoyment of, God in Christ Jesus; and we have had to bear up under a storm of slander, prejudice, ignorance, and ill-will. Notwithstanding all this, the Universal cause yet gains ground. We have four churches constituted in this country, five ordained ministers, and several young gifts. We hold conferences twice a year by messengers from the churches. The number of members now in Society in Kentucky is about two hundred, we hope all walking in love; besides many other Christians in different societies who believe in the universal love of God, who have not joined with us in society yet, for reasons best known to themselves."

From still another and very different source we derive evidence of the spread of Universalism in Kentucky

at this period. Rev. Peter Cartwright, a Methodist preacher, makes several allusions to it in his "Autobiography." On page 40 he says: —

"Rev. James O. Kelly left the M. E. Church in 1792. He was a popular and powerful preacher, and drew off many preachers and thousands of members with him. He formed what he called the Republican Methodist Church, flourished for a few years, and then divisions and subdivisions entered among his followers. Some of his preachers turned Arians, some Universalists, and some joined the so-called New Lights, and some returned to the M. E. Church."

On page 28, he mentions that a Dr. Beverly Allen, who had been a travelling preacher in the Methodist Episcopal Church, became a Universalist; and on page 29, he says that in Logan County, in 1793, there was a "Baptist minister, an old man of strong mind and *good*, very good, natural abilities, who, having been brought up a rigid Calvinist, and having been taught to preach the doctrine of particular election and reprobation, at length his good sense revolted at the horrid idea, and having no correct books on theology, he plunged into the opposite extreme, namely, Universal Redemption."

Finally, on page 48, he speaks of a revival commencing in 1801, and spreading through almost the entire inhabited parts of Kentucky, Tennessee, and the Carolinas; and says that, as one result of it, "Universalism was almost driven from the land."

"C. H.," a New York correspondent of the Magazine, of whom nothing further is known, furnished an article on anti-Trinitarianism, in which he said: —

"It is not at all surprising that the doctrine of Universal Salvation and anti-Trinitarianism should meet with so little comparative success, and be so coolly received. . . . And as for the doctrine of the Trinity, I am of opinion it was first broached by some new-fangled sophist, and promulgated by fallacious cavillers, till at last it stole into the creeds of established churches, where it has remained so long uncontradicted. And I believe that there are very few men of sense belonging to those churches which profess these doctrines but are convinced of their absurdity, though from their peaceable disposition and diffidence, as before hinted, they do not openly oppose them."

The entire article is emphatically and strongly Universalist, and in a succeeding number of the Magazine there is a report of a "Speech delivered at a Debate in a Literary Society in New York," by "C. H.," on the question, "Whether the doctrine of Universal Salvation is agreeable to Scripture or not?" taking decidedly and with ability the Universalist side.

Drs. Smith and Young are in the list of subscribers to the "Free Univeral Magazine," and it is not improbable that they were members of the debating society which considered Universalism in New York in 1793.

The editor of the Magazine took ground against the doctrine of future punishment. The following queries and answers from his pen were addressed to "Mr. and Mrs. Brown": —

"Query I. Is it not the inward or celestial man, who in Scripture is called the new creature?

"If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; though the outward man perish, saith Paul, the inward man (which I suppose to be the new man) is renewed day by day. See Eph. iii. 16; Romans vi. 22; 2 Cor. iv. 16.

"I think it is said concerning the inward or new man, that he is created after God, in righteousness and true holiness. See Eph. ii. 24; Colos. iii. 10.

"Query II. Is it the old or outward man that commits the sins we are guilty of, or is it the new and inward man that is a sinner?

"He that, or whoso, is born of God (which must be the new man) sinneth not, or doth not commit sin; he cannot sin, because he is born of God (1 John iii. 9). In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil. They which are the children of the flesh are not the children of God. See Romans ix. 8.

"The promise was but to the seed; and the children of the *promise* only are counted for the seed. See Romans ix. 8.

"Query III. Is it the child of the flesh, the old man, that rises from the child of God, or the new man that rises?

"Jesus said concerning those that rise from the dead (speaking unexceptionally), 'They are the children of God, and are equal to the angels of God.' See Luke xx. 36. And John says that the children of God do not commit sin. See 1 John iii. 9, 10.

"The Apostle saith, 'If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.' And surely all that rise from the dead must be new creatures, and must be in Christ; for 'in Christ shall all be made alive.'

"It is the new man, and not the old, that rises from the dead, and the new man never committed sin. How can there be a punishment for sin after the resurrection?

"Query IV. If to those who are raised from the dead old things are passed away, and all things are become new, pray what sins are those who rise from the dead punished for? If only the new man, who is called the child of God, rises from the dead, and if the new man

never sinned, pray how can he be punished according to his works? Surely if his works were not sinful then he cannot deserve punishment. Reader, judge! hearer, answer."

Mr. Sarjent also took ground against the doctrine of vicarious atonement and imputed righteousness. He said, —

"From whence have we derived the idea of Christ's having already satisfied the demands of the law, or justice, for all men? or that the personal righteousness of Christ, short of its being wrought in us, and independent of our partaking thereof, is that which justifies us? Pray what did justice demand of the creature? Not that one man should be righteous for all the rest, and the rest remain unrighteous; for this could not have established order in the creation; but that all should obey, and be holy before God. This is what the law required; this is what the command called for; and this is what justice demanded; and surely that which justifies us is what justice demanded, except the demand is changed, which cannot be.

"True, it is said that as by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Mark, nought is made righteous already, but shall be made so. Mankind was never affected by the sin of Adam to condemnation in any greater degree than they were made partakers of that sin; so shall we not be affected by the righteousness of Christ to justification in any greater degree than we are made partakers of that righteousness.

"The law of God was a divine rule or system of life from eternity, established by him, not from an expectation of any advantage arising thereby to himself from the creature; but it being a transcript of his moral perfections, and expressive of his nature, God was pleased to appoint it as the only rule of life wherein we might

enjoy communion with God and immortality, and so be truly happy. Hence the creature's salvation and happiness are the chief objects which render the creature's conformity to the law and reconciliation to God necessary, because God stands in no need of anything from creatures. Upon this does the creature's salvation and happiness depend, and in this does the creature's salvation and happiness consist; therefore it is inconsistent to suppose that one man's righteousness should be accepted in place and instead of all the rest, and they accepted and justified thereby, short of their partaking of that righteousness, or in any greater degree than in proportion to their partaking thereof.

"From these observations I humbly conceive that it is just as impossible or improper to say that Christ is happiness and life for us, independent of our partaking of that life and happiness, as to say he has satisfied the law and justice in our stead, independent, or short of, our partaking of God's righteousness and becoming reconciled to God.

"For us to be justified, and for the law and justice to be satisfied with us, I conceive, is for us to be brought into, and confirmed in, a justified state; that is, a state which the divine law and justice approves of, and which state is attainable in this life. But some men may ask me how. I answer, by a derivation of that life divine from Jesus, the quickening Spirit; which will never fail to be granted unto every soul who receives Jesus Christ as he is held forth in the gospel: for '*to as many as receive him, to them gives he power to become the sons of God.*'

"By deriving a new and spiritual life from Christ, who is called the BREAD of life, the soul becomes quickened from a state of death in trespasses and sins; is raised from a temporary life to the enjoyment of an endless life (Heb. vii. 16), and by *this* the soul becomes transformed by the renewing of the mind, being begotten

from above; the new man, the descendant of the second Adam, becomes constituted in the old; and the new and inward man, being not a child of the flesh, but a child of promise, is counted for one of the seed to whom the promise was made, being, by the spirit of adoption, made a child of God, and so an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ; and therefore shall be glorified together with him. This is that spiritual Jew which is a Jew inwardly, and who is circumcised in heart; and this is that Israelite in whose heart is written, and in whose mind is printed, the spiritual law of God, and whose praise is not of men — being hidden (Psalm lxxxiii. 3), and invisible to the world (1 John iii. 1), — but of God; being found approved in the eye of the law and justice, and therefore is commended of the Lord (2 Cor. x. 18).

"This inward, or new man, distinct from the outward and old man, is every way perfectly justifiable in the eye of the law and justice; being perfectly conformed thereunto, and delighting therein continually. '*I delight in the law of God after the inward man.*' This is justification; this is reconciliation to God; and this is that child of God that cannot commit sin. This is the time, and not before, that law and justice is satisfied with (or approves of) that soul; and this is the time that the salvation (or deliverance) of that soul is effected; for now, and not before, is the time that the soul is brought to call on the name of the Lord; and '*whoso calleth on his name*' (saith the Prophet and the Apostle) '*shall be delivered.*'

"If our obedience to the law, as individuals, be not necessary, as above hinted, in order to our justification as individuals, how could our disobedience, as individuals, render us condemnable. I humbly crave an answer."

So also, in answer to a correspondent, Mr. Sarjent wrote the following on the "Satisfaction of Justice" —

"Justice at first required obedience from every individual of the human race, and as justice is unchangeable in its requisitions, nothing short of such obedience can possibly be satisfactory to justice. Mere punishment can never be satisfactory to pure justice, but universal obedience is; because *this* is what justice requires; and as Jesus is engaged to establish universal obedience by reconciling all things to God, it is considered with God as already done in him, because he is not liable to be defeated in any of his undertakings; therefore justice in this sense is satisfied in Jesus."

These views, so similar to those avowed by Caleb Rich, and afterwards by Hosea Ballou, found a zealous exponent in Rev. Abel Sarjent, who probably was ignorant of the existence of the above-mentioned worthies. It is unfortunate that we have no knowledge of the steps by which he was led to these conclusions, and that with the end of the first and only volume of his magazine he vanishes from our sight. In 1793 he resided at New Hanover, N. J., supplying the pulpit of the church in that place, and also preaching at Shiloh and Cape May, in the same State. Before the year closed he had moved to Baltimore, where he was keeping a "book-store at the head of Market Street," whence he issued his prospectus, for a second volume of the magazine, "to commence as soon as five hundred copies are subscribed for;" but as the first volume had but one hundred and forty-eight subscribers, it is probable that the conditions of commencing a second were never complied with. What became of him after March, 1794, we cannot ascertain. Until recently the author has supposed him to be identical with the editor and publisher of "The Lamp of Liberty," a Universalist

magazine irregularly published in Cincinnati in 1827; but a letter of Rev. J. Kidwell, written in 1847, describes the editor of that magazine as bearing the name of Abel M. Sergent, who was in early life, and until 1802, a Baptist, when he became a believer in the annihilation of the wicked, and after that organized a sect called the Halcyons, and then another new sect, and finally "became a Universalist of the Origen cast." This man could not possibly have been the editor of "The Free Universal Magazine."

On the 4th of September, 1793, a "General Convention" of the "Universal Churches and Societies in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, and New York," was held at Oxford, Mass. No record of its proceedings has been preserved. It issued a circular letter, signed by John Murray, moderator, and George Richards, clerk; and we have no means of knowing what others were in attendance, except Rev. Michael Coffin, who was then preaching in Vermont and the adjacent portions of New York. The circular letter is addressed —

"To their brethren in the faith of the gospel, resident at Boston, Gloucester, Rehoboth, Bellingham, Milford, Providence, Attleborough, Grafton, Oxford, Charlton, Sutton, Thompson, Ward, Richmond, Warwick, Orange, Winchester, Clarendon, Apollett [Pawlet], Kingsbury, Whitehall, Granville, Ballstown [Ballston], Milton, Portsmouth, Alstead, Langdon, Chesterfield, Hardwick, Petersham, Grantham, Warner, Deering, Woodstock, Preston, Wallingford, etc.; and to every church and society scattered abroad in the States of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Vermont, and New York."

We are not to suppose that societies or churches existed in all these thirty-six places; and it is now impossible to designate, with few exceptions, which of them had organizations.

This Convention, under slightly different names from time to time, has not failed to hold an annual session from 1793 to the present time. It is the parent of the present "Universalist General Convention," there being no ground for the opinion which very generally prevails in the denomination that our present general organization grew out of the Oxford Association of 1785. It is very certain that no session of that body was held after 1787. The fact that the New England Universalists sought advice, if not authority, from the Philadelphia Convention of 1792 with regard to organizing a convention for the "four New England States," is presumptive evidence that no convention or association was then in existence in that locality, and may be considered as conclusive proof that the Oxford Association of 1785 had become defunct.

In October, 1793, Mr. Murray moved to Boston, "stipulating with the Gloucesterians," Mrs. Murray says, "that he should occasionally visit them, and that they should be allowed to command his presence upon every distressing or important exigence; and the distance being no more than an easy ride of a few hours, the adjustment was accomplished without much difficulty. Yet did the preacher continue dissatisfied until the establishment of his successor, in the midst of his long-loved and early friends."

Rev. George Richards, in a letter written in 1802, says that "Mr. Murray has confessed since he left Cape

Ann, that he has had reasons to be sorry for it."[1] Mr. Murray's installation in Boston took place on the 23d of October, being conducted by the senior deacon, Oliver W. Lane.[2]

An incident occurred in the northeast part of Pennsylvania in 1793, which had much influence in promoting the cause of Universalism in that then new and rapidly improving section of the country. Rev. Noah Murray, mentioned in a previous chapter, had settled in the Wyoming Valley in 1785, and in 1789 had been appointed a justice of the peace for Luzerne County. In 1791 he had made his home in Athens, in that county, and was preaching there and in the neighboring town of Sheshequin, the friends of Universalism in those two places having effected a more or less complete organization. In Sheshequin a small society of Baptists had been brought together by the zealous labors of Rev. Moses Park, who was employed during the week as a teacher of a common school, and also as a teacher of music, while on Sundays he preached the gospel as held by the Baptists. Mr. Park was much alarmed at the success which attended Mr. Murray's labors, and having great confidence in the truth as held by the Baptists, believed that he could easily silence his heretical neighbor. In this conviction he was joined by Joseph Kinney, Esq., a Baptist deacon, "a great reader and a close and logical reasoner, irreproachable in his integrity, and a man of mark among his townsmen." A challenge was therefore sent to Mr. Murray to meet these gentlemen in a dispute on Universalism

[1] Universalist Quarterly, July, 1872, p. 282.

[2] See Life of Murray, edition of 1870, pp. 361–363.

at the residence of Mr. Kinney. Mr. Murray granted them an immediate opportunity; and at sunset, one evening in the summer of 1793, they sat down, Bibles in hand, to the contest, "Mr. Park having procured the only large Bible with a Concordance there was in the country." Sunrise the next morning found them still sitting there, the challengers acknowledging their defeat, and rejoicing in the belief of the doctrine of universal salvation.

The late Colonel Joseph Kingsbury wrote a biographical sketch of Mr. Park, which was published in "The Herald of Gospel Truth and Watchman of Liberty," at Montrose, Penn., Jan. 16, 1833; it gives many facts in regard to him, which we here briefly summarize. Moses Park was born in Preston, Conn., Aug. 1, 1766, and at ten years of age moved with his father to the Wyoming Valley, from whence they were compelled to flee for their lives at the time of the Indian massacre, July, 1778, and returned to Connecticut. Here the lad availed himself of further educational advantages, and at the age of seventeen began to teach school in Warwick, N. Y. While there he united with the Baptist church, and on returning to Preston in 1789, joined by letter the Baptist church in Stonington. Two years later he moved to Sheshequin, bearing with him a certificate from the church that he had "for some time past been a regular member of the First Baptist church in Stonington, and still so remains. The church esteem him to have a gift in preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord."

Of the controversy with Rev. Mr. Murray, and the

subsequent career of Mr. Park, his biographer thus writes: —

"As it is almost forty years since the writer of this memoir heard the particulars of this controversy, he cannot state it in detail; nor does he recollect the texts of Scripture brought forward by the challenger in defence of his cause, except one, and this was the forty-fourth verse of the eighth chapter of John: 'Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.' This was brought forward with a view to prove that the wicked were the children of the devil. But Mr. Murray compelled his opponent to acknowledge that the devil was not the father of a single child of the human family, but that God was the Father of us all. He also proved to the satisfaction of Mr. Park, by this same John, that that which was meant by this text was, to be destroyed: 'For this purpose was the Son of God made manifest, that he might destroy the works of the devil.' Therefore, if mankind were not the workmanship of the devil, — not made by him, — it was not man that was to be destroyed, but the principle of sin attached to him, which the devil was the father of, and which the Son of God came to destroy.

"Suffice it to say, that all the strong texts, and all the arguments brought forward by Mr. Park, were swept away like thistle-down before the wind. He acknowledged himself beat; and not only beat, but converted to Universalism! His Baptist brethren did not possess the same magnanimity. One of them had so much of the works of the devil about him, and so inimical was he to Mr. Murray in consequence of this defeat of his minister, that he said, 'If Esquire Murray should finally be saved, and go to heaven, he did not want to go there himself.' Mr. Murray replied: 'You cannot help yourself, Brother S——, you have got to go there. When

our Saviour has destroyed the works of the devil, with which you are now connected, you will be perfectly willing to go in my company.'

"Our Brother Park, immediately following the above controversy, commenced preaching Universalism. He was the first preacher of this doctrine that the writer of this article ever heard; and this was on the sixth day of June, 1794. It was new to the writer at the time. Moreover, it appeared somewhat strange to one who had been brought up according to the strictest sect of the Presbyterians. It nevertheless appeared to be a glorious doctrine. And what made it appear the more so, was the discovery the writer soon made, that it was a doctrine easily proved.

"Mr. Park was now forsaken by his Baptist friends; and to so high a pitch were their prejudices excited, that they refused to give him the hand in salutations. They could not deny that he was a Christian in practice, and therefore they considered him the more dangerous. They said he would be sorry for deserting them, and would finally come back to their faith. He replied, 'It would be coming back, and not going forward, to return to them.'

"Mr. Park continued to preach the gospel in this place till the year 1797. At this time, much was said about New Connecticut, now Ohio. And Mr. Park, although of a slender constitution, started for that country in May of this year. At this time, he had two children. With these, and his wife, he bid adieu to his connections and friends in this quarter, and after a long and fatiguing journey arrived in the country in which he had contemplated settling. He made a stand near the Chagrin River, and took up a lot of land, which, at this time, was twenty-five miles from any inhabitants. For six months after he arrived at this place, he saw no human beings (except his own family), but two hunt-

ers, who occasionally called at his hut. The country soon after this began to be rapidly settled; and in May, 1799, Mr. Park was appointed a Justice of the Peace. His commission came from Arthur St. Clair, who, at this time, was Governor of the territory northwest of the River Ohio. Previous to this, however, Mr. Park had been attacked by a violent fit of sickness, which happened at a time when no physicians were to be had, and no nurses, except his wife. This sickness, with the mighty forest he had previously encountered, nearly destroyed his constitution. The unhealthiness of the country, and his feeble situation, induced his friends in Pennsylvania to advise his return to Sheshequin. Accordingly, in September, 1801, he returned to Sheshequin, having sold his farm at Chagrin for a price sufficient to purchase a small farm in this place. This he shortly sold again, for an advanced price, and bought another farm, in the town of Athens, on the east side, and adjoining the Susquehanna River, about a mile below the village of Athens. Having now a situation sufficiently eligible to support himself and family, he commenced preaching again the doctrine of God's impartial grace to mankind. Believing himself now amply provided for, in a pecuniary sense, he would take no compensation for dispensing the gospel. 'Freely it came to him, and freely he would administer it.' He continued thus, laboring week days to the extent of his feeble constitution, and Sundays preaching, until 1812, when he was taken with cramp-convulsion fits, which nearly put an end to his life. His Baptist friends still kept their eyes upon him; and believing now that he was soon to depart 'to that bourne whence no traveller returns' — believing that he could not recover to contradict their stories — they circulated reports that he had renounced his belief in the doctrine of Universal Salvation. He did recover, however, and when told of the

reports of his former friends, he said 'they were too fast; he was yet here to answer for himself.' He did answer for himself, and continued to preach the gospel of the Lord Jesus until the fall of 1816, when he was again taken sick, which confined him to the house, mostly, through the winter following. In March, his second son went under the ice, and was lost. And although he bore this and his other afflictions with the greatest meekness and resignation, yet altogether it was too mighty for his broken constitution, and he sank under it. He died the 30th day of May, 1817. He got up in the morning as usual, and had partly dressed himself, when he spoke to his wife and said he felt faint. These were the last words he ever spoke. He sat himself down in a chair. His wife was by his side instantly, and supposed him to be in a fainting fit. But his spirit had left its frail tenement. It departed without a sigh or a groan. And thus terminated the life of one of the best men the world ever knew. He was an affectionate husband, a kind and indulgent father. Benevolent and charitable to all, a friend to mankind, and as meek as Moses of old.

"Mr. Park, in his last sickness, was often asked about his faith in the doctrine he had preached. He ever answered, 'My faith grows stronger, and heaven brightens before me as I draw near my end.' He often prayed that he might be permitted to depart without seeing the anguish of his family. His prayers were answered.

"As a preacher of the gospel he was second to few that have ever been among us. His style was unstudied, plain, and simple, yet flowing and somewhat diffuse. Elevated with his subject, he would soar into eloquence and sublimity, and never became dry and uninteresting. Eloquent and affectionately persuasive in his manner, his words were like the 'dew of Hermon that descended upon the mountains of Zion.' Though he dwelt with

joy on the theme of the great salvation, he preached it to inspire in others the same joyous hope and sincerity of homage, and made it subservient to the information of mankind. Possessed of tender sensibility, on funeral occasions his sympathetic feelings would sometimes suppress the power of utterance; but this only seemed to give him access to the afflicted soul, and invite its confidence in the Divine benignity and compassion, and in the words of mercy which he spake.

"The influence of his life was equal to the eloquence of his preaching. Plain without rusticity, humble without servility, polite without effort, and friendly without affectation, he united dignity with condescension, and familiarity with a virtuous elevation of soul. In short, he was truly a follower of the Saviour; 'he lived the doctrines which he taught,' and verified by a well-ordered life in his intercourse with men, that his faith worked by love, and that his soul was purified by the 'undefiled religion' which he taught. In conclusion, we can say, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.'"

The author of the above sketch was a native of Enfield, Ct., where he was born May 9, 1774. When twenty years of age he went to Sheshequin as a land-surveyor, and soon, as himself states, became a convert from Presbyterianism to Universalism, under the preaching of Mr. Park. He was a man of strict integrity, and of more than ordinary abilities, as is evident from the trusts committed to him as agent for the large landed estates of Le Ray de Chaumont, Count de Chastelleux, the Bank of North America, and other parties to whom lands were granted by the United States in payment of loans made during the Revolution. From his conversion till his death he was an exemplary member of, and generous contributor to, the Univer-

salist Society in Sheshequin. His descendants rejoice in the same belief; one of them, a granddaughter, — the Rev. Myra Kingsbury, — being an ordained preacher of our faith.

Joseph Kinney — a brief statement of whose characteristics has already been quoted from the "History of Bradford County, Penn.," and who, as we have seen, was associated with Mr. Park in the discussion with Mr. Murray — was also born in Connecticut, in 1755, being a native of Plainfield. He was a soldier in the Revolution, and settled at Wyoming in 1778, where he taught school. In 1783 he moved to Sheshequin, and became a farmer. In 1790 he was appointed a Justice of the Peace for Luzerne County, then a large territory in which was included the present Bradford County. His granddaughter, Mrs. Julia H. Scott, was eminent among us as a poetess, and a devoted Universalist.

We close the account of the year 1793 with a brief notice of an eminent layman in New York, — Joseph Young, M. D., — who published that year a small duodecimo volume entitled, "Calvinism and Universalism Contrasted: in a Series of Letters to a Friend." The author was born in 1733, and —

"acquired his professional education under the tuition of his elder brother, Dr. Thomas Young, who died in Philadelphia in the year 1777, and of whom Dr. Rush speaks in one of his books on yellow fever. Both the brothers were men of talents and eminence in their profession. At the commencement of the American revolutionary war Dr. Joseph Young resided in the city of Albany, at which place the general hospital of the continental army was established; in which department the Doctor served as chief prescribing physician from

its first establishment to its final dissolution. He prescribed for the first patient brought into that hospital, and also for the last but one at the close of the war. He afterwards removed to the city of New York, where he continued his professional pursuits, and acquired an extensive practice, till the year 1796, when he retired from business, — or, perhaps more properly speaking, when he ceased to receive compensation for his professional services. He was blessed with a vigorous, independent and enterprising mind; his professional talents were of the first order; his acquirements extensive; his integrity unsuspected; his veracity undoubted; his honor without a spot; his moral character blameless; in short, so far as fame spread his reputation, he was esteemed and respected as an intelligent, a benevolent, a virtuous and good man. He died without disease and without pain, on the 18th day of April, 1814, at the age of eighty-two years."[1]

Dr. Young was the teacher and patron of Dr. William Pitt Smith, the author of the book in defence of Universalism, published in 1787, and noticed in the chapter treating of that date.

[1] Whittemore's Modern History of Universalism, 1830, pp. 380, 381.

CHAPTER VI.

1794–1797.

Rev. Elhanan Winchester's return from England. — A Great Door open to Him. — Replies to Thomas Paine's "Age of Reason." — The New England Convention in 1794. — Shippie Townsend's Catechism. — The Convention adopted the Philadelphia Platform of Articles of Faith, and Form of Church Government. — Elders Michael Coffin and Joab Young, sent out as Missionaries. — Universalism in Duchess County, N. Y. — Impromptu Ordination of Rev. Hosea Ballou. — Rev. Joseph Stephens. — His Book, "The Great Workshop." — A Western Convention. — Sharon, Conn., and Egremont, Mass. — Rev. James Briggs. — The Philadelphia Church. — Rev. Joseph Priestly, LL. D., and the Unitarians of Philadelphia. — Shippie Townsend's "Gospel News." — Reprint of "Petitpierre on Divine Goodness." — The New England Convention in 1795. — The Philadelphia Convention in 1795. — Reports of Churches. — Mr. Winchester in Philadelphia. — Preaches in New York. — Rev. Hosea Ballou advocates Unitarian Universalism. — Early Unitarian Societies. — Timid Policy of the Unitarians. — Growth of Unitarian Views among Universalists. — The New England Convention in 1796. — Rev. Zebulon Streeter. — Differences of Opinion. — The Philadelphia Convention of 1796. — Rev. Thomas Jones. — High Price of Living. — Compensation of Preachers. — Dr. Rush on Mr. Winchester's Preaching. — Mr. Winchester in New York. — Goes to Hartford, Conn. — Preaches There. — Universalist Society in New York. — Rev. Edward Mitchell. — Dr. Priestly in Philadelphia. — His Universalism. — Rev. Nathan Strong's work against Universalism. — Mr. Winchester's Last Sermon. — His Sickness and Death. — The New England Convention in 1797. — Mr. Murray publishes a Pamphlet on "Universalism Vindicated." — It is Re-published in Rome, N. Y., in 1799. — Extracts from the Pamphlet. — Its Favorable Reception by some of the Boston Clergymen. — Secret Universalism in Boston. — Death of Rev. Dr. John Clark. — Mr. Murray's estimate of Him.

EARLY in 1794, Rev. Elhanan Winchester returned from England. Visiting his parents in Brookline, Mass., he preached several times in that town, supplied Mr. Murray's pulpit in Boston often, and also preached

in Roxbury, Hull, Oxford, South Brimfield, Charlton, Grafton, Milford, Cambridge, Newton, Hingham, Dudley, Weston, Monson, Warwick, Athol, Dana, and many localities in Western Massachusetts; Windham, Canterbury, Norwich and Scotland, Connecticut. Crowds flocked to hear him, and his labors were as successful as they were unwearied. In a letter to his brother he said: —

"I never saw the country so open to me as it is now. I preached twenty-five sermons in the month of September, which, considering my state of weakness, is as much as could be expected. If I had the health and strength now that I had twenty-four years ago, when I first began to preach, I could labor to far more advantage and better purpose than ever I did. But I bless God for the success I have had in winning souls to Christ, and I hope to obtain at last the approbation of my Judge, and then all will be well."

Later in the year, he wrote to a friend in London: —

"I have the greatest door open that I ever saw, insomuch that I am surprised at the alteration since I was here last. I have preached in a great many meeting-houses of different denominations, and to great numbers of people, as often as eight or nine times a week, and with greater acceptance than ever I did."

In the midst of all these public labors he found time to write and publish "A Defence of Divine Revelation, in ten Letters to Thomas Paine; being an Answer to his first part of 'The Age of Reason.'" This volume of 113 pages, octavo, was a successful attempt to offset Mr. Paine's attempt to show the fallacy of the Bible from the Bible itself, by making manifest its truth

from the evidence afforded in the Bible. A competent critic has said: —

"The style and spirit of the work are excellent. The author has met Mr. P.'s flippant and profane wit with practical good sense, his bold and unproved assertions with solid argument, his low scurrility with manly modesty, and his empty bombast with the words of truth and soberness." [1]

At the session of the New England Convention at Oxford, in September, 1794, Mr. Winchester was present, and presided as moderator, Rev. Joab Young being clerk. The circular letter is the only document extant with reference to this session. It omits Alstead and Ballston from the list of places mentioned the previous year, and adds the following: Scituate, Marlow, Westmoreland, Croyden, Cornish, Enfield, Canaan, Springfield, Boscawen, Hopkington, Heniker, Ware, Hillsborough, Campbells-Gore, Charlestown, Claremont, Hartland, Pomfret, Bridgewater, Barnard, Reading, Cavendish, Rockingham, Chester, Andover, Derby, Townshend, Wardsborough, Newfane, Putney, Middleton, Durham, Woodstock, Sturbridge, Brookfield, New London, Norwich, Stonington. In all thirty-eight new places since the preceding September. Rev. Mr. Murray, since his removal to Boston, had itinerated extensively in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut; and Rev. Hosea Ballou was "travelling almost incessantly in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut." [2] Of Mr. Winchester's labors we have already spoken, and it is probable that all the preachers of our faith at

[1] Rev. E. M. Stone's Biography of Winchester, p. 217.

[2] Whittemore's Life of Ballou, vol. i. p. 102.

that time occupied more or less extensive missionary fields, as it is certain that their labors were highly gratifying.

An abstract of the proceedings of the Convention was incorporated in the circular letter. The items, except those which related to routine business, were as follfollows : —

"Chose a committee to compose a short piece, simplifying a system of religion adapted to the capacity of children, to instruct them in the first rudiments of the Gospel of Christ."

Who the members of this committee were does not appear, nor is there any record of their making report of their doings. A catechism was issued that year, however, by Shippie Townsend, a prominent member of the church in Boston. He wrote it, he says, "having been requested by some worthy friends to endeavor to put into their hands something in this way as an assistant in instructing their children." Possibly this request may refer to the vote of the Convention. The catechism presents the Rellyan theory of Universalism.

Another item of business was this : —

"Adopted the Philadelphia platform of articles of faith and form of church government, and recommended that the same be observed by the churches and societies forming this Convention."

So far as recommendation could effect it, this action of the Convention brought all the Universalists of the land into harmony of belief in regard to the great essentials of doctrine, and was an emphatic endorsement of organization and discipline.

The last recorded item of business related to missionary work: —

"Chose Elders Michael Coffin and Joab Young missionaries, to go forth in a circuitous manner and preach the everlasting gospel to the inhabitants of the abovementioned States for the space of one year."

What places were visited in consequence of this vote, we do not know. A writer in the "Christian Ambassador," Feb. 11, 1860, gives an account of early Universalist preaching in Dutchess County, N. Y., mentioning several families in Amenia who were then friendly to the doctrine, and saying: —

"These people were visited by a Universalist clergyman, whose name is not now remembered, but who preached in the house of Samuel Swift as early as 1796."

Possibly this may have been one of the results of the Convention's missionary appointment.

A singularly impressive incident at this session was the unexpected and impromptu ordination of Rev. Hosea Ballou, who had for the past three years wholly given himself to the work of the ministry, although not settled as pastor over any society.

"At one of the public services of the Convention this year, — probably the last service, — Mr. Winchester preached. He was a man of much warmth of feeling and great readiness of utterance. Young Mr. Ballou was in the pulpit with him, and as Mr. Winchester drew towards the close of his sermon, his remarks began to have a clear reference to the service of an ordination, especially to the delivery of the Scriptures to the candidate. He took up the Bible, and pressing it against the

breast of the young man, he said, 'Brother Ballou, I press to your heart the written Jehovah!' The effect upon the congregation was sudden and powerful. After holding the sacred volume in this manner for a moment, he spoke to Elder Young in an imperative but affectionate tone, saying, 'Brother Young, charge him;' which the elder proceeded to do. The delivery of the Scriptures and charge were then regarded as distinct services. We have frequently heard Mr. Ballou say that he did not know he was to receive ordination until Mr. Winchester commenced the remarks which were peculiar to such a service."[1]

The Philadelphia Convention held its session for 1794 in October, which proved an unfortunate change from May, as there was much sickness at that time in the city, and many at a distance were afraid to attend. Four preachers were present, and seven churches were represented by messengers. One new preacher, Rev. Joseph Stephens, pastor of the church at Shiloh, N. J., was in attendance. Mr. Stephens came to New Jersey in 1789 from Caswell County, N. C.; and from the first of January in that year until April 3, 1793, was pastor of the Baptist church at Upper Freehold. On the last-named date he was "granted a letter of recommendation and dismission." July 22, the same year, the church at Upper Freehold "suspended him from Communion on accusations against him prior to the convention of the church; and receiving a letter from him, when met, in which he declares his sentiments in favor of universal salvation," the suspension was to remain in force "until he gives satisfaction;" and a "commit-

[1] Whittemore's Life of Rev. Hosea Ballou, vol. i. p. 106.

tee to wait upon Mr. Stephens to admonish him and cite him to attend upon the church at our next meeting of business," was duly appointed. How long he remained at Shiloh, or continued to preach as a Universalist, we have not been able to learn. Many years after the close of his pastorate at Upper Freehold he taught school in that neighborhood. He died at Philadelphia, May 2, 1847, in the eighty-sixth year of his age.

In 1837 Mr. Stephens published a book designed to show the reader how to obtain wealth and be happy.[1] In the closing part of the work, having spoken of the gospel as "unsearchable riches," he adds: —

"The great object of the Saviour upon his entering on the grand work of our redemption was to bruise the head of the serpent (see Gen. iii. 15). The bruise referred to must be considered mortal, from which he never was to recover. But prior to his dissolution he will be at the head of the rise and fall of empires; his works of darkness will be known and practised through every part of the habitable globe. He has had great success in opposing the moral government of God. He has exceedingly corrupted the minds of the more wealthy part of creation, and stimulated his tens of thousands by fair promises, to rebel against their rightful Lord and Sovereign. But let us remember that the grand object of the Saviour's mission was to destroy the works of the devil (see 1 John iii. 8). 'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.'

[1] The Great Workshop; or, the Way to Amass Wealth and be Happy. Connected with the Way to Keep and Appropriate it, both in a Temporal and Moral Sense, by Joseph Stephens. Philadelphia, 1837. 18mo. 214 pages.

"What are we to understand by the works of the devil? *Answer:* All manner of works which may consist in thought, word, or deed opposed to the moral government of God.

"By what means are the works of the devil to be destroyed? *Answer:* By the word of God, which is contained in the Old and New Testaments. It is compared to a hammer which demolishes, or breaks into pieces; to fire which consumes, to the wind more violent than a tornado, and to water, which allays thirst and purifies the heart. Sometimes the works of the devil are destroyed by judgments.

"Are there no other means employed to demolish the devil's temple? Yes. As the devil has a great number of ministers in his service who are continually propagating lies, so it behooved the great Saviour of the world to nominate and qualify men to oppose and refute them out of the sacred writings. . . .

"But is it possible to destroy the devil; is he not an infinite being? *Answer:* I presume not, as that which is infinite cannot be destroyed. Notwithstanding he is said to be the prince of the power of the air, yet his influence is exceedingly limited; he can't go beyond his chain. The devil will be permitted to rule in the hearts of the disobedient a certain period unknown; but he will finally fall a victim with all his principalities and powers by the power of the destroying angel of the everlasting covenant. . . .

"A great part of the Christian world cannot believe that the object Christ had in view was to destroy the devil, because they read that a great fire was prepared for both him and his angels. How do they know but what this great fire spoken of was originally designed to destroy him? It is very strange that Christians should be opposed to his destruction, when it is their daily prayer that his kingdom might be destroyed, and why not the king with it?" (Pages 151–155.)

After adducing citations from the Scriptures showing the purpose of God and the mission of Christ, he adds: —

"From the foregoing investigations of positive declarations spoken by our blessed Redeemer and his apostles, we learn this undeniable truth, that the great object our Saviour had in view was to save all for whom he gave his life a ransom from sin, connected with all its dangerous consequences. But we do not see as yet this great object accomplished; still we are to believe that the great Saviour will accomplish the great and necessary work. And as this great salvation is to be brought about through the means which our Lord has devised and appointed, all the faithful heralds of the cross should arise and put on the armor of light" (p. 158).

From the records of the session of the Philadelphia Convention in 1794, we extract the following: —

"Brother David Evans informs us that in November last, he visited the Brethren and Church at Pike Run, in Washington County, Pennsylvania, of the same faith and gospel order with us, where he received certain information that said church, and the church at Morgantown, the church at George's Hill, the church at Clarksburg, and the church lately constituted at Short Creek, of the same faith, on account of their great distance from us, had formed themselves into a Convention, and had their first meeting at Morgantown, the preceding August. That he had access to their Minutes, wherein it appeared that their second Convention was appointed to meet at Pike Run, last August, when, as their Minutes express, they would deliberate on the propriety of corresponding in future with us by letter and messengers.

"*Resolved*, That this Convention do acquiesce and rejoice in the proceedings of said Convention; and that we

have not received any letter from them is perhaps owing to the present troubles in that country. That this Convention will endeavor to correspond by letter with them, and in order thereto, do request that Brother Evans do write them in our behalf, and that he enclose a copy of the Minutes of our present proceedings."

The "troubles in that country," no doubt allude to what is known as the Whiskey Insurrection, — a difficulty which made sad wreck of all religious enterprises in that section of the Union. There is no further mention of the Western Convention, nor of the Churches belonging to it, and the presumption is that the extreme poverty of the people, greatly augmented by the political disturbances, caused the abandoment of all organizations.

The records also show that "a letter from a sister church in Sharon, Conn., consisting of fifty members, — also from a sister church in Egremont, County of Berkshire, Mass., consisting of thirty members, — was read." These letters set forth that each of these churches had "made choice of Mr. James Briggs, Preacher of the Gospel," to represent them in the Convention. Their information in regard to the Convention had been gleaned from "The Free Universal Magazine;" and it is probable that they had no knowledge of the newly-organized Convention in New England. Of Rev. James Briggs we have not been able to obtain further information.

The Philadelphia Church reported to the Convention: —

"As to ourselves we are less in number than we were heretofore. The Lord has been pleased to take some

from amongst us by death, and our number at present is thirty-six. Our Heavenly Father hath been pleased to put it into our hearts to build a house for worship, which we began and carried on so far as you may see."

Dr. Joseph Priestley, who was then in Philadelphia, had drawn around him a few Unitarians, who came to the aid of the Universalists in so far completing their church edifice as to enable them to use it for religious services. Writing to Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, in June, 1794, Dr. Priestley said: —

"A place of worship is building here by a society who call themselves Universalists; they propose to leave it open to any sect of Christians three days in the week, but they want money to finish it. My friends think to furnish them with money, and engage the use of it for Sunday mornings."

This arrangement was perfected, the Unitarians advancing "some hundreds of dollars" for the completion of the church. "When the house was first occupied for worship," says Rev. A. C. Thomas,[1] "the walls were without plastering, and the only seats plain benches. I was told that the first pulpit was a rough platform made by a mastmaker and a shoemaker."

Two books were published in 1794, one of which exerted a wide-spread influence, and the other is rarely seen, and seldom mentioned.

The first, "Thoughts on the Divine Government," by Ferdinand Oliver Petitpierre, was reprinted from an English edition, by some one interested in the spread of Universalist views, in Hartford, Conn. The work

[1] "Century of Universalism," p. 65.

was originally published in French, at Hamburg, in 1786. The author was minister of Chaux-de-Fonds, a village in Switzerland, in the canton of Neufchatel, and was known as a Universalist as early as 1770. His book passed through several editions in America, and exerted a great influence. Of it Dr. Whittemore said:[1] —

"The work is one of the most pleasing defences of Universal Salvation which has ever been published. The author commences by maintaining that to make mankind happy is the primary object of God's moral government. His will is to save them, and the means by which he effects their salvation is by bringing them to the knowledge of the truth. He has revealed himself to the understanding of man, in nature and in revelation. These it is our duty to study; the latter with particular caution, without prejudice, and with a sincere desire to know what is truth. 'Here I solemnly protest,' says the author, 'in the presence of the Almighty, that in reading and meditating on his word to know his will and designs towards us, I have with sincerity and in his fear sought truth in its purity, with simplicity of heart, without hope or fear of its agreeing or disagreeing with that catechism which I was taught to receive in my youth, without sufficient examination, — well convinced that if such or such opinions were true, I should find them confirmed in Scripture; if false, they would not become true by my obstinately persisting to believe them without examination. So that I had nothing to lose, or rather I had everything to gain, by bringing them sincerely to this test; since the only thing of importance to me was to fly from error, and to come at the knowledge of the truth.' In the body of the work he treats of the

[1] "Modern History of Universalism," pp. 153–157.

infinite goodness of God, its nature, design, duration, and effects: the proofs of the divine goodness are deduced first, from his design in the creation of man, which must have been benevolent, and second from the testimonies of the sacred writers, who represent God to be kind, and his love to be stronger than that of the fondest earthly parent. The consequences which may be deduced from the infinite goodness are very fully considered. He maintains it is utterly impossible that there should be anything in the divine mind opposed to this goodness; his holiness, his justice, his authority, his majesty, his glory, spring up out of his goodness, and are but branches of it. Holiness is consistent with the love of God to sinners, inasmuch as he loves them as his creatures, but hates their iniquity, and he will therefore purge it from them, and make them clean; and all those Scriptures in which the sacred writers speak of God's hating man, should be interpreted agreeably with this supposition. The justice of God is that immutable will to dispense to every one what best corresponds to his moral state. Men are sinners, and God punishes them with severity; but this severity is dictated by goodness, and all the punishments God inflicts are declared to be for the sinner's good. How certain then that justice, the principle which dispenses rewards and punishments, is but a modification of goodness itself! How opposed to this is the dreadful doctrine of eternal punishment, an error which grew up out of a misconception of the meaning of the word rendered everlasting! God punishes always to reform, a fact which the author establishes with the most irresistible reasoning. Divine Justice never proceeds to extreme rigor in punishing, until every gentler means has been exhausted without effect; it never employs that rigor only so much and so long as shall be necessary to the destruction of sin, and the conversion of the sinner; and when the sinner is sincerely penitent,

God will graciously forgive. These being the principles on which all punishments are administered, the eternal duration of suffering is absolutely impossible, a position the author establishes by a great variety of texts arranged in several classes. The first class is composed of those in which the sacred writers, comparing the severity of God with his favor, represent the former to be temporary, but the latter to be without end; the second, those in which he declares he will not always chide; and the third, those which assert that he is our creator, and that he will not desert the work of his hands; again he confirms it by those which assert the universal destination of men to holiness and happiness; and lastly by a passage, invariably produced for an opposite purpose, viz. '*these shall go away into everlasting punishment,*' in which the word rendered punishment, he maintains, quoting the authority of Wittenbach and Grotius, signifies a remedial, corrective discipline. The infinite authority of God is entirely founded upon his goodness. The erroneous supposition that God has a right from his mere authority to reprobate men to eternal pain, is shown to be unfounded; and it is maintained that God's authority is the right to confer happiness in his own way. As to the majesty and glory of God, it is shown that goodness gives them all their lustre, as there can be no perfections of the divine character more nearly allied to goodness than they. Thus the author proves that 'all the sublime perfections of God as they exist in him, and in the manner they are displayed to his creatures, far from containing any contradiction or opposition to each other, are in a constant and beautiful harmony; and admirably conspire to spread perfection and happiness throughout the universe.'

"Another consequence of the infinity of divine goodness is, that *every act* of God must be an act of infinite goodness; even the permission of what we call evil can-

not be exempted from this construction. And the author contends that each individual may say, 'every event that has befallen me, from the first moment of my existence to the present, as well as whatever will befall me throughout all eternity, is the greatest possible good that the infinite bounty of my Creator can bestow.' In fact, he excludes real evil from the universe, and maintains that nothing is evil while connected with the end God designs to promote thereby. Eternal punishment is real evil, an infinite evil, which everything conspires to exclude from the plan of God. This most excellent treatise is closed with a survey of the practical consequences which flow from such a view of the divine plan: it inspires the heart with joy; creates within us a love of God, a reconciliation to his will, a desire to serve and obey him; and, in fine, all religion is based upon it; and every system opposed to goodness is false and pernicious in the highest degree. The doctrine of a limited future punishment is admitted, though not particularly defended."

The second work was an octavo of 117 pages, published anonymously at New London, Conn., and entitled, "Universalism Contrary to Scripture." It was no doubt called forth by the preaching of John Murray in that town or vicinity; as the author says, in a foot-note on page 35: —

"The expositions of the Universalists, referred to in this work, are principally taken from Mr. Murray's preaching, especially Matt. xxv. 31 to the end, Luke xiii. 23–30, and Luke xvi. 19 to the end, by the writer of this pamphlet, who was an attentive hearer."

The author's sole attack is on Rellyanism, the only form of Universalism of which he seems to have any knowledge, and his handling of the subject is logical,

ingenious, and in a good spirit. We present a brief extract: —

"Universalists say salvation is only through and in consequence of an antecedent union of all Adam's race with Christ. The Scripture represents the contrary, — that salvation by Christ is not to Adam's posterity collectively, but individually, and is only through faith, which makes the union. Their opinion is only supported by similitudes, figures, and fiction, or detached passages and particular texts, which they wrest to their own opinion. But the contrary is founded on the whole tenor of Scripture, and on plain passages too, as, God commands *all* men everywhere to repent. And this is his command: that we should believe on the name of his Son; that he died for *all;* that they which *live*," etc. (p. 107).

In 1795, the New England Convention met at Bennington, Vt. The only record preserved of its business is these two items: "Brother John Murray was chosen moderator, Brother Hosea Ballou, clerk;" and, "Examined and approved the credentials of the several attendant messengers, and transacted all such special business as came before the Convention." Until the session in 1800, there are no records of proceedings, the circular letters for each year being all that the Convention published, or preserved for its records.

The Philadelphia Convention met in 1795 in October. The attendance was small, — only four churches being represented. Israel Israel, of Philadelphia, was appointed moderator of the session. Mr. Israel was a prominent and influential citizen, having been chairman of the Philadelphia Committee of Safety during the Revolution, and subsequently sheriff of the city and county of Philadelphia. The Convention —

"Agreed that Brother Israel be appointed to write to the Convention in the State of Vermont [*i. e.* the New England Convention, which had recently held its session in Bennington], giving them information of the number and state of the churches here, also requesting them to write in like manner to our next convention; and that they would write their opinion on the propriety of having a triennial convention, composed of delegates from the annual conventions; and that Brother Evans write in like manner to the Convention in the western part of this State."

The circular letter, written by the clerk of the session, Rev. David Evans, was as follows: —

"*Dear Brethren,* — Through the love and kindness of God our Saviour, we have had this our annual meeting; and although we have not had the happiness of seeing the faces of several of our dear brethren whom we expected and did greatly desire would meet with us, yet our meeting, under the influences of God our Saviour, was in a good degree comfortable, feeling the importance of the most precious truth which we profess worthy in earnestness and meekness to be contended for, whether many or few do from the heart embrace it. Dear brethren, let us heartily encourage each other in this good work! May every part of our conduct in life manifest unto the world that the most precious truth which we profess, when from the heart believed, is truly reforming as well as comforting! and those who are not careful in this, we have cause to conclude that they are only nominal, and not real, believers. And forasmuch as there is a lamentation that so many of our churches are destitute of ministerial supplies, let us be united in prayer to God that he would raise for his Israel many pastors after his own heart, who shall feed his people with knowledge and understanding.

"We have agreed that our next convention be at Philadelphia, last Tuesday of October next, at three o'clock, P. M.

"Dear brethren, praying that the God of perfect purity and love will give you and us the teachings of his spirit to lead us into all truth, that the Divine purposes which are all founded in infinite wisdom and goodness be accomplished, we subscribe ourselves your brethren in the belief of the great salvation."

It was also agreed that the following letter to delinquent churches should be appended to the above: —

"*Dear Brethren,* — It hath been cause of much lamentation to us that you and so many of the churches have sent neither letters nor messengers to this convention. We pray God our Father that you may not be left to forsake your first love. And in addition to our circular letter, we think meet to write to the delinquent churches, earnestly entreating them to send letters and messengers to our next convention, and the reason of their neglect or failure at this time."

The causes of "delinquency" may have been many and various; but a notable one was the scarcity of ministerial laborers, and the infrequency of meetings for religious worship consequent thereon. "As to the state of our church," wrote the Philadelphians, "we are still without a pastor, but are in some hopes our good Lord will give us one to go in and out before us. At present our friend and brother, Mr. Winchester, preaches to us."

The church at Shiloh reported: —

"We have cause to lament that we are once more left in a widowed state as to a minister; yet we have cause to bless God that we still have an existence as a church,

though small. We are few in number, at best, and there is such a declination in religion in this part that we barely meet at any time. We have no minister to lead us, and several of our members have fallen away from the faith, and have turned again to ———, and since our last, one is dead; so by this means we have become very small. Now, dear brethren, if you will join with us in prayers that the Lord of the harvest will send laborers into the harvest, and with your prayers join your endeavors to visit and help us, then we believe the Lord will add his blessing, and we shall become a flourishing branch in the vineyard of God."

So, too, the church at New Hanover: —

"Though we are few, we endeavor to keep up our meetings, mindful of the blessed promise of our Lord, who says that, 'where two or three are met in his name, there he will be in the midst.' We do think that we find the promise fulfilled at times; but we wish you to visit us as often as any of you can find it convenient. We have not had a Universalist minister with us for almost a year."

Rev. Elhanan Winchester, as we have previously said, returned to America in 1794. In the summer of 1795, he again took up his abode in Philadelphia, rented a house, and probably intended to make that city his future residence, his intimate friend, Dr. Benjamin Rush, having arranged to have him supply several medical students with board. He supplied the pulpit of the Philadelphia church, as regularly as his health would permit, during the remainder of that year, with occasional visits to New York, where large congregations listened to his message. July 10, he thus writes from that city: —

"We have begun to get a large acquaintance in this city, but I have only preached twice since our arrival here, but expect to preach again this evening in Hunter's Hotel, where I preached last evening; for all the churches here are so shut up that I can get none of them to preach in. I have, however, got the circus, — a large place where feats of horsemanship are shown, — which will contain many people."

Three days later, he writes to the same correspondent:

"I preached yesterday twice in the circus. In the evening there was a large congregation of near a thousand people. They have just opened a subscription towards building a meeting-house open to all parties; they have nearly an hundred pounds already subscribed, although the book is but just opened. It is expected that large encouragement will be given."

We have no further information with regard to this attempt at erecting a place of worship, and the probabilities are that Mr. Winchester's failing health prevented his following up the favoring opportunity. Ten years before this, according to Mrs. Murray's statement ("Life of Murray," page 339), "a church had been purchased in New York, which they forebore to open until it could be dedicated by the peace-speaking voice of the promulgator." What became of this property, if the purchase was completed, — of which there may be some doubt, — we are not informed.

By far the most significant event in 1795 — certainly the one which exerted the most permanent influence — was the presentation of Universalism on a Unitarian basis, by Rev. Hosea Ballou. "He probably became a Unitarian," says his biographer, Rev. Dr.

Whittemore, "in 1794."[1] But his first sermon from this standpoint, so far as we have any knowledge, was preached in Sturbridge, Mass., a year later. Rev. Edward Turner, who listened to the sermon, and conversed with the preacher after service on the novel grounds he had maintained in his discourse, has left this record: —

"The Universalists appear to have taken the lead of other denominations in announcing Unitarian views of the person of Christ and of the nature of the atonement. Though, as we have before said, the preachers of this order were understood to found their belief on Calvinistic principles; yet there might be some among them who had attained to clearer and more rational conceptions of the sense of the Scriptures in relation to these topics. We can speak of the change in their mode of preaching from memory only. It was not till the year 1795 that we noticed any change at all. Others, it is possible, may have discovered it before. There may have been many preachers who electrified and astounded some of their auditors with the announcement of the doctrine of Christ's subordination to the Father, and with the novel idea of reconciliation as affecting human beings alone. We however heard these statements, and the arguments in support of them, for the first time, in the year above mentioned. The preacher on that occasion was the author of the 'Treatise on Atonement.'"[2]

As already noticed, Unitarian views had so far prevailed in Pennsylvania and New Jersey as to be formulated into a creed, assented to by several Universalist churches, and published to the world with a recom-

[1] Life of Rev. Hosea Ballou, vol. i. p. 118.

[2] Universalist Quarterly, vol. vi. January, 1849, pp. 13, 14.

mendation that they be favorably received by others, at least two years before Mr. Ballou preached them in New England; but it is not probable that they found favor with many. Least of all is it to be supposed that Mr. Ballou had any knowledge of their prevalence in that section of the country; while it is certain that their influence was limited, and that the organizations soon ceased to exist.

Not a book on the subject of the Unitarian controversy had at that time been published in America. Dr. Mayhew of Boston had made an assault upon the doctrine of the trinity thirty years before Mr. Ballou preached his sermon; but of this Mr. Ballou had never heard. Nor had he any knowledge of Rev. Dr. Freeman and his Unitarian work at King's Chapel, resulting in the modifying of the liturgy as early as 1785, concerning which work Dr. Freeman wrote to Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, of England, in July, 1786: —

"The liturgy of our church was during a long time unpopular; but your approbation, the note of Dr. Price annexed to a letter of Dr. Lush, and the mention which Dr. Priestley is pleased to make of it in his sermon upon the 5th of November, have raised it in esteem. . . . I wish the work was more worthy of your approbation. I can only say that I endeavored to make it so by attempting to introduce your liturgy entire; but the people of the chapel were not ripe for so great a change. Some defects and improprieties I was under the necessity of retaining, for the sake of inducing them to omit the most exceptional parts of the old service, the Athanasian prayers. Perhaps in some future day, when their minds become more enlightened, they may consent to a further alteration."

Twenty-five years, however, elapsed before this hope was realized. A new edition of the liturgy was published in 1811, of which Rev. Thomas Belsham, in his "Life of Lindsey," said: —

"Nothing is to be found which is inconsistent with the purest principles of Unitarian worship as such; and with a very few alterations, chiefly verbal, it might be made perfectly unobjectionable."

Three years before Mr. Ballou's sermon, Unitarian societies had been formed in Portland and Saco, Me.; but Mr. Wells, of Boston, writing to Mr. Belsham in 1812, said: —

"The churches at Portland and Saco of which you speak, hardly ever saw the light, and exist no longer."

And he makes the confession, —

"With regard to the progress of Unitarianism I have but little to say. Its tenets have spread very extensively in New England, but I believe there is only one church *professedly* Unitarian."

Although he claims that "most of our Boston clergy and respectable laymen (of whom we have many enlightened theologians) are Unitarians;" yet "the controversy," he adds, "is seldom or never introduced into the pulpit."

And he justifies this timid policy by saying that —

"This state of things appears to me so favorable to the dissemination of correct sentiments, that I should perhaps regret a great degree of excitement in the public mind upon these subjects. The majority would eventually be against us. The ignorant, the violent, the ambitious, and the cunning would carry the multitude with them in religion as they do in politics. One Dr. M., in a

contest for spreading his own sentiments among the *great body* of the people, would, at least for a time, beat ten Priestleys. Not to dwell upon the consideration that Unitarianism consists rather in *not* believing, and that it is more easy to gain proselytes to absurd opinions than to make them zealous *in refusing* to believe. With what arms, when the οἱ πολλοὶ are the judges, can virtue, and learning, and honor contend with craft, and cunning, and equivocation, and falsehood, and intolerant zeal? Learning is worse than useless; virtue is often diffident of her own conclusions, and at any rate more anxious to render men good Christians than to make Christians of her own denomination; and that self-respect, which is the companion of virtue, disdains to meet the low cunning of her adversaries, or to flatter the low prejudices of her judges. I think, then, it must be assumed as an axiom that a persevering controversy upon this question would render the multitude bigoted and persecuting Calvinists. Then come systems and catechisms in abundance. Every conceited deacon, every parishioner who has, or thinks he has, a smattering in theology, becomes the inquisitor of his pastor. In such circumstances learning and good sense have no chance. They cannot be heard. . . . I do not know that you will approve my sentiments, nor am I very confident of their justness; but I have seen the contest between truth and falsehood, *before the multitude;* between everything which is respectable and everything which is detestable, so unequal in politics that I dread the event in matters of religion. Still, I would be no advocate for timidity, much less for anything like equivocation, or evasion; and it must be confessed that prudence often degenerates into these vices."

Dr. Freeman wrote to Mr. Lindsey in May, 1796:

"I am acquainted with a number of ministers, particularly in the southern part of this State, who avow and

publicly preach this sentiment. There are others more cautious who content themselves with leading their hearers, by a course of rational but prudent sermons, gradually and insensibly to embrace it. Though this latter mode is not what I entirely approve, yet it produces good effects. For the people are thus kept out of the reach of false opinion, and are prepared for the impressions which will be made on them by more bold and ardent successors, who will probably be raised up when these timid characters are removed off the stage."

These "timid characters" seem to have shaped the policy of the Unitarians of America for full twenty years after Hosea Ballou's bold advocacy of the doctrine of the Divine unity; for, *as a sect*, the Unitarians were not known in this country until after the year 1815.

"The late Professor Norton was one of the most forward to speak out. There had been a struggle in 1805 in regard to the election of the elder Dr. Ware to the Hollis Professorship of Divinity at Harvard University; but no one came out openly in favor of Unitarianism until 1815, and this was brought about almost by accident. Rev. J. S. Buckminster said in 1809 in a letter to Mr. Belsham, of England: 'Do you wish to know anything of American theology? I can only tell you that except at the small town of Boston and its vicinity, there cannot be collected from a space of one hundred miles six clergymen who have any conceptions of rational theology, and who would not *shrink* from the suspicion of anti-Trinitarianism in any shape.' In 1812, Mr. Norton, already named, came out with the first volume of the 'General Repository,' in which he defended 'Liberal Christianity.' As long afterwards as 1819, when Mr. Norton was elected Professor of Biblical Criticism,

Dr. Channing, who was then a member of the Corporation, objected to giving him the title of Professor, through fear it might injure the college to make so conspicuous its connection with one holding such opinions; but he was willing to assign him the duties and salary of the office. In 1815 broke out the Unitarian controversy, which, as we have said, originated in an accident, namely, the unlucky event of a copy of Belsham's 'Life of Lindsey' (an English work), falling into the hands of an Orthodox editor in this country. In this work, the private letters of eminent American anti-Trinitarians to their English brethren were published. When these private letters thus became known to the Orthodox party, they at once determined to compel, if possible, the anti-Trinitarian party to avow themselves. The most celebrated controversy that ever took place in this country between the Trinitarians and their opponents then ensued; and the Unitarians (as they came afterwards to be called) were compelled, as it were, to come out openly and take their position. We commend to the attention of the reader a very valuable article, from the pen of the late lamented Professor Norton, on matters embraced in this paragraph, which will be found in the 'Christian Examiner' for September, 1849." [1]

Mr. Ballou, as we have said, reached his conclusions unaided by human teachers. His authority and his sole umpire was the Bible. In a letter to Rev. Thomas Whittemore, in November, 1829, he said: —

"I had preached but a short time before my mind was entirely freed from all the perplexities of the doctrine of the Trinity, and the common notions of Atonement. But in making these advances, as I am disposed to call

[1] Rev. Dr. Whittemore, foot-note on pages 112, 113 of vol. i., Life of Rev. Hosea Ballou.

them, I had the assistance of no author or writer. As fast as these old doctrines were by any means rendered the subjects of inquiry in my mind, they became exploded. But it would be difficult for me now to recall the particular incidents which suggested queries in my mind respecting them. It may be proper for me here to state one circumstance which, no doubt, had no small tendency to bring me on to the ground where I have for many years felt established. It was my reading some deistical writings. By this means I was led to see that it was utterly impossible to maintain Christianity as it had been generally believed in the church. This led me of course to examine the Scriptures, that I might determine the question whether they did really teach that Jesus Christ died to reconcile an unchangeable God to his creatures. You cannot suppose that I was long in finding that, so far from teaching such absurdities, the Scriptures teach that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. The question respecting the Trinity was by the same means as speedily settled. But I cannot say for certainty in what year I became a Unitarian; but it was long before I wrote my treatise on atonement."

But Mr. Ballou was not a man to stifle his convictions when once they had become established in his own mind. He must speak what he believed, and must seek to lead others to the knowledge of what he regarded as the truth. Opposition was of course aroused; "and," he says, "I found it as difficult to convince my elders of the errors of Calvinistic tenets as other people of the error of the doctrine of endless punishment." It was not long, however, before his open avowal and strong demonstration of the truth bore abundant fruit.

"The other ministers," said the late Rev. Dr. Ballou,

in an article in the "Universalist Quarterly" for January, 1848, —

"gradually followed him in this reform; and as early as 1805 the work may be said to have been completed, though Mr. Murray at Boston, and Mr. Mitchell at New York still maintained the former views with great strenuousness. But from this time onwards the Universalist ministry in this country has, with only three or four exceptions, publicly avowed and often defended, Unitarian sentiments on these points, both in the pulpit and from the press."

The New England Convention met in September, 1796, at Winchester, N. H. No record is preserved of the number in attendance, nor of the business done. Rev. Zebulon Streeter was moderator, and also the writer of the circular letter to the churches. This is the first mention that we have of Mr. Streeter in connection with the ministry and the Convention; but among the papers of the late Rev. Dr. Ballou is a memorandum of a conversation held with the senior Hosea Ballou in 1847, when the latter mentioned Zebulon Streeter as being already in the ministry when he began to preach in 1791. The late Rev. Lemuel Willis said of Mr. Streeter: —

"He was a saintly man, and adorned the doctrine of God our Saviour with a well-ordered life and a Christian conversation. He was long a preacher of the final salvation of the entire race, and was quite a patriarch in the denomination; and hence he was appointed to preside as moderator of the General Convention for a long number of years in succession. He was not only a man of great moral excellence and very amiable, but was a person of much dignity of character and bearing. Although in

some respects his brother Adams was his superior, it is said, yet he was an able minister of the New Testament; and did a great deal by his noble talents as a public teacher and by his lovely Christian spirit both in public and in private." [1]

He was probably an able writer rather than a gifted speaker.

It is said that some of the brethren in attendance at the Convention in 1796, were disposed to contend upon matters calculated to produce discord and disunion, but that Mr. Streeter's excellent advice convinced them of the folly of contention. However this might have been, the circular letter gives evidence that diversities of opinion were liable to lead to profitless dispute, and warns against it: —

"It is true that different professors of the Abrahamic faith have dissimilar views concerning the modes in which so great a salvation will be individually made known to the purchased possession; but we collectively and separately, seriously, affectionately, meekly, entreat our brethren that they would not give themselves over to vain disputations on the manner in which Jehovah worketh the council of his will. Rather rest ye contented that God, who hath promised, is faithful to perform; and cheerfully receive all those who are blessed with gifts of edification, however diverse their gifts may be, preferring no man above his fellow-man, and rendering honor to none save unto Jesus Christ, the only Holy and the only Reverend."

"Mr. Streeter's death took place," says Mr. Willis, "in September, 1808, in the town of Surrey, N. H. His age at the time of his decease I do not know; but

[1] The Universalist, June 26, 1875.

I do know that he was lovingly spoken of as the venerable Zebulon Streeter, and I am sure that he was revered."

The Philadelphia Convention of 1796 convened in Philadelphia in October. The Minutes of the session have not been preserved. It was a time of trial in all religious denominations, and the attendance at the Convention was small. The church in Philadelphia reported that their numbers were few, and that they had long been without a minister, but "of late Mr. Thomas Jones arrived from Europe," and was now their preacher.

"We lament," they wrote, "the cold and lifeless state of Christianity in general, in this day of falling away. But more especially in our sister churches, who once professed to be for Christ, and were zealous to meet and confer with each other, some of whom neglected to send letters or messengers to our last yearly meeting."

Besides the Philadelphia church, the churches of New Britain and New Hanover were the only ones to send reports.

Rev. Thomas Jones, the clerk of the session and newly settled pastor in Philadelphia, was a recent and valuable acquisition to the Universalist ministry in America. He was born at Narbath, Pembrokeshire, South Wales, April 5, 1763, and was educated for the Calvinistic Methodist ministry at Trevacca, Wales, at the seminary established and supported by the Countess of Huntingdon, a zealous Whitfieldian Methodist. Graduating in 1785, he was at once ordained and settled at Berks, England. In 1788 he was brought by the study of the Scriptures to the belief of Universal-

ism, which he at once openly professed and preached. His church instead of casting him off, severed its connection with the Methodists, and retained him till his removal to this country, eight years later. He came here at the earnest desire of Rev. John Murray, who was interested in settling a pastor in Philadelphia. Eight years after coming to America, he moved to Gloucester, Mass., and became pastor of the church there, where he remained until his death, August 20, 1846.

As intimated above, this was a trying year for religious organizations; not only on account of the prevalence of infidel notions, which had infected some of the so-called wise men of the nation, and were in many cases regarded, after the example of France, by many of the common people as an adjunct of Democracy, but also on account of the extreme high prices of the necessaries of life. This scarcity and high price was due to the war then prevailing on the continent of Europe. Mr. Murray mentions it as being exceedingly embarrassing to salaried men. In a letter to Rev. Robert Redding, he says: —

"I suffer much from it, though I have twenty-two dollars a week. But I pay four hundred dollars a year for my house, and have but nine pounds of bread for a dollar, five pounds of butter for a dollar, a good piece of beef 9*d.* a pound, veal 7*d.*, vegetables dear in proportion; milk 6*d.* a quart, eggs 1*s.* a dozen; wood, before it is put on the fire, six dollars a cord. We have no other fuel here. We give our maid in the kitchen 6*s.* a week. We burn twenty-five cords of wood a year. You may judge from this rough sketch how it is at present in this country. At this time I do not know a dearer country

to live in in the world. But these are merely temporary ills. We encourage hope it will be better when the war is over."

Rev. Duncan McLean writes to a friend from his home in Loudon Co., Virginia : —

"I preach statedly in Alexandria to great audiences, and in several other places at considerable distances from my own residence. This is attended with toil, and my support hitherto hath been inconsiderable; in fact, I have often suffered respecting the conveniences of life."

The church at Pike Run, Pennsylvania, reported concerning their minister : —

"Our beloved brother Abel Sarjent, who has faithfully labored these four years in this country, is now we expect about to leave us. We have no room to say aught against it, for he has faithfully labored, and has been instrumental in convincing very many, and we may say it has been chiefly upon his own charges; and he is now thereby so reduced that he is in a likely way to be distressed by the law for want of cash to defray his necessary charges in life, and we cannot help him, because it is impossible to obtain cash in this country."

At a little later date than this, Rev. George Richards, in a letter to Rev. Edward Turner, urging him to settle in Gloucester, Mass., said : —

"I think it improbable that their present circumstances will admit of more than seven dollars per Sabbath; but with the addition of marriages, presents, &c., it will amount to more, and I should suppose that you might count on four hundred and fifty dollars a year. . . . I should imagine that much of your family's support was

derived from preaching; and as the country brethren seldom rise above five dollars, and as they seldom employ the whole year, that consequently your prospects are not above two hundred dollars cash per year; and this acquired by an immensity of riding and travelling in all weathers."

Mr. Richards was obliged to give a large portion of his time to school teaching, in order to obtain enough to support his family; and the same was true of Mr. Jones in Philadelphia. This state of affairs naturally accounts for the inactivity of many of the preachers and congregations, as lamented over by the Convention.

Mr. Winchester preached in Philadelphia during the winter and spring of 1796. Dr. Rush, in a letter dated March 4th, says: —

"Mr. Winchester preaches on Sunday evenings to crowded audiences, but they are composed chiefly of the second and lower classes of our citizens. He is as usual, eloquent, scriptural, and irresistible in his reasonings upon all subjects."

The following June, his health failed so rapidly that Mr. Winchester went to New York, where he spent several months, but was probably unable to preach. A year before, at the suggestion of Hon. Timothy Pickering, with whom he enjoyed an intimate acquaintance, he had written and published a "Political Catechism," which he dedicated to the universities and seminaries of learning in America. In it he warns the people of the United States of —

"the baneful effects of infidelity, and lucidly exposes the evil tendency of French principles. It is well calculated to impress the minds of American youth with a

sense of the value of their religious and civil liberty, and of the importance of their country in a political and commercial view. It was generally approved, and passed through several editions. By many it was thought well adapted to the use of schools, and it appears that negotiations were commenced by his friends in Providence for the supply of the New England States." [1]

Aware of his rapidly approaching death, Mr. Winchester was solicitous for the future maintenance of his wife; and to this end contemplated giving to the world a revised and uniform edition of his writings. Hence his removal to New York, where he intended to supervise this work. The plan did not succeed; probably his strength did not allow the care and labor which the project demanded. Dr. Francis says: "Winchester's Lectures on Universal Restoration and on the Prophecies, had been circulated in New York, with a strong recommendatory letter in their behalf from the pen of Dr. Benjamin Rush." [2] This may have been a new New York edition.

During his stay in New York, Mr. Winchester enjoyed a friendly intimacy with Governor Jay, and other distinguished gentlemen, who were more or less in sympathy with his views. In October he went to Hartford, Conn. Having dined, he sauntered out to view the place.

"Observing a funeral procession, he joined it and entered the enclosure of the dead. The assemblage was large, and the scene to him solemn and affecting. Addresses at the grave were then of frequent occurrence.

[1] Stone's Life of Winchester, p. 224.
[2] Old New York, p. 94.

The place and occasion induced in him a strong desire to speak to his dying fellow-men. The coffin was just lowered into its earthly receptacle, when he arrested the attention of the multitude by breaking forth in the sublime words of Jesus to the afflicted sisters of Lazarus, 'I am the resurrection and the life.' The effect was electric. A strain of almost supernatural eloquence now saluted the ear, and engaged the eager gaze of the spell-bound throng. The stranger's manner, his clerical habit, and the sepulchral hue of his countenance, conspired to agitate their hearts with various and indescribable emotions; and the tearful eye of many gave evidence to the power of his remarks. If the thoughtful were impressed with the importance of living for death and eternity, the Christian mourner could rejoice in the immortal hopes of the gospel; and when he ceased to speak, the inquiries, Who is he? Whence came he? broke spontaneously from every lip.

"There were at this time, several gentlemen in Hartford who cherished a kindred faith. With these Mr. Winchester was not long in forming an acquaintance, and at the house of one of them he continued to reside until his decease. When it became noised abroad that the stranger at the grave was a clergyman, a general desire was expressed to hear him preach. Mr. Winchester accordingly delivered one or two lectures that week. In the mean time arrangements were matured for the performance of public worship on the approaching Sabbath. No building or hall sufficiently capacious being available, the theatre was first obtained for that purpose; and thus, probably for the first time in our country, a house of plays was converted into a house of prayer. Here the meetings were repeated with encouraging success. A respectable congregation soon gathered, and had Mr. Winchester been willing to accept a permanent settlement, a meeting-house would have been erected, and a

society organized. He continued to preach in the theatre every Lord's day, and in one of the meeting-houses on Wednesday evenings until the beginning of December, when, in consequence of the inclement weather, a chamber in the house of Mr. Thomas Tisdale (an ardent friend), capable of accommodating about four hundred persons, was fitted up for religious worship. Here Mr. Winchester continued his meetings until disease confined him to the bed of death. 'His texts were generally selected from the Pentateuch, the Psalms, the book of Isaiah, and the Revelations; and his discourses probably ran much on the types of the law, the promises of the gospel, and the fulfilment of prophecy.'" [1]

Some two months before Mr. Winchester went to New York, a movement was commenced which resulted in the formation of a Universalist society in that city. The circumstances are thus related by one who took an active part in organizing and sustaining the enterprise, — the late Rev. Edward Mitchell: —

"Late in March, or on the afternoon of Friday, the 1st of April, 1796, George Roberts, who we believe was then the presiding elder of the Methodist society of the city of New York, called on Abraham E. Brouwer, at his house, and informed him that he did not come to controvert the subject of universal salvation with him, but to inform him that, as he held that doctrine, it was not proper that he should at the same time hold an office in the church. The reply of Mr. Brouwer was, 'I have frequently offered my class-paper to Mr. Dickens, and he has as often refused to take it; but now, sir, you are welcome to it,' and accordingly handed it to him. When Mr. Roberts was about to go away, Robert Snow, who had long been the intimate friend of Mr. Brouwer, pre-

[1] Stone's Life of Winchester, pp. 227–229.

sented himself from the street, and the term 'brother' was reciprocated between them. Mr. Roberts went away, and Mr. Snow went in. He was soon informed of what had taken place, and after some conversation, Mr. Snow came to the house of the writer, and asked him to go with him to Brother Brouwer's. Here the writer was soon informed of what had taken place. After a long consultation, we thought it probable that the intention of Mr. Roberts was to follow up his act of discipline by expulsion; but, to put the matter beyond doubt, we determined to wait on him the next morning, which we did. Mr. Snow was our spokesman, and informed him that our visit was in consequence of his visit of the preceding evening to our brother, Brouwer, and that we thought that as he had taken from Mr. Brouwer his class-paper, perhaps he intended to excommunicate. His reply was, 'That was my intention.' He was then told that on the subject of religion we were all of one mind; that what he intended to do with one, we supposed he would do with all; and that as it was not common to exclude from a religious society for a mere difference of opinion, and as we were all men in business, our characters were dear to us, and we requested that he would be so good as to give us a certificate stating that it was not for any immorality of conduct, but for this difference, that we were thus excluded. He answered that there would be a meeting of the leaders that evening, and that he would lay the matter before them.

"In the course of the day we waited on Mr. Daniel Smith, who had formerly been a settled preacher in the city, but who was then a local preacher, and with whom we were on very good terms of intimacy, and of whom we requested that, as he would be at the meeting that evening, he would not advocate our cause, but urge a decision of it. The meeting was held, and the subject of the morning stated. Mr. Smith asked Mr. Roberts: 'Brother

Roberts, do you ask our opinion that you may know what we think, or that you may be governed by it?' The answer was: 'I cannot say that I will be governed by your opinion unless it agrees with my own.' The meeting broke up without coming to any decision.

"Thinking ourselves aggrieved by the situation in which Mr. Roberts' conduct had placed us, we wrote him a note on the subject, urging him to a decision of our case; that if upon fair inquiry we should be deemed worthy of expulsion, he would proceed to that without delay; that if the contrary, he would then publicly acknowledge us as acceptable members of the Methodist church in the city of New York. The answer was, that he was yet of the same mind as he was when he conversed with us, and that he would act accordingly, unless we would previously withdraw. After waiting two weeks, another note was written to him, still urging him to a decision; and if it was not agreeable to him to do this publicly, then proposing a more private one, by a note from him, and furnishing a form of private exclusion and one of continuance, notwithstanding our being Universalists. This was answered by a note, stating that he had found that it was his duty not to be hasty in his conclusions, and that neither authority nor resolution were wanting in him to carry this business into effect. To us this appeared very much like saying, I will exclude you, but I will choose my own time to do it. We also thought that he might hope, by delaying the exercise of the authority which he supposed he had, to find something else that would serve as an excuse independent of our religious opinions; and, after waiting another week, we took leave of him and the church to which he belonged by a note, saying: —

Sir, — As you cannot, or will not, do us the justice to which we are entitled, we do not choose any longer to continue in this

condition. Therefore, from the date hereof we shall no longer consider ourselves as members of the Methodist Society, nor subject to its precarious discipline.

Signed,

Abm. E. Brouwer.
Robt. Snow.
Edward Mitchell.

New York, 20th April, 1796.

"Some time after, we were read out of the Methodist Society as *withdrawn*.

"The circumstances in the above statement are correct; for though it is now more than thirty-seven years since they took place, they were of such interest in their nature, and of so much importance in their results, — they have been so often the subject of conversation both with friends and enemies,— that they could not be easily forgotten, and they are now fresh in the memory of the writer; and the more so, as a difference of opinion has ever existed between him and Mr. Brouwer relative to their separation from the Methodist Church, — the latter insisting that they had only withdrawn, while the former maintained that they had been as literally turned out as that man had been who, having been invited into a house, was afterwards told that unless he took his leave he should be put out by force; and, after some altercation, thought fit to walk out. Was he or was he not turned out? The original letters of Mr. Roberts are now in existence, as are also the rough drafts of the letters of B., S., and M., in the handwriting of Robert Snow.

"Thus situated, belonging to no church, we seriously considered what was our duty as professors of religion, on the subject of worship. We knew that we could read the Scriptures together, pray to God for each other, sing the praise of God our Saviour, and be helpers to each other in our common faith. We therefore determined to worship together, hoping for the enjoyment of the prom-

ise of Christ, that where two or three are gathered together in his name, he would be with them.

"As it is necessary that wherever men associate for any permanent purpose they should distinctly understand by what rules they would govern themselves in their associate character, so we thought it best to gather up these rules; and while we were engaged in this work, sundry persons who had previously belonged to the Methodist Society, and who with us hoped for the final happiness of all men, united with us, and among these Barnet Mooney, a highly esteemed friend, whose sound, good sense was of great service to us in the formation of our constitution: he was the writer of the preamble to it. By its title we find its date, for it is called 'Constitution of the Society of United Christian Friends, established at New York, May, 1796.'

"This constitution is signed by Abraham E. Brouwer, president, and Jacob Clinch, clerk.

"In the course of this year we made a small selection of hymns for our own use, and published them with our constitution annexed. The preface to this little book was written by Robert Snow, and we find it signed by Abraham E. Brouwer, elder, and Jacob Clinch, clerk.

"The prominent features of this constitution were as follows: —

"Article I. declared the title, 'United Christian Friends.'

"Article II. sec. 1, required that an elder be chosen by ballot to serve one year, and not to be eligible for the succeeding year; and his duty was to watch over the interests of the society. Sec. 2 requires a steward to be chosen by ballot for one year, and not to be eligible for the succeeding year, to receive and pay all moneys, to provide for the Lord's Supper and feast of charity, and report his accounts every three months. Sec. 3 requires a clerk to be chosen by ballot to serve one year, to keep

the Minutes, and register the names of the members of the society.

"Article III. divides the society into classes, of not more than twelve, nor less than six, — each class to choose its own leader, whose duty it was to see each member once a week, to inquire after their spiritual welfare, and to advise, reprove in love, comfort, or exhort, as occasion might require; to report to the elder and steward the case of such in his class as were sick or needy; and they three, or a majority of them, to give the requisite relief. The leader was not to serve the same class for more than three months successively.

"Article IV. sec. 1, requires the observance of the Lord's Supper. Sec. 2 appoints the first Sunday evening of each month to celebrate a feast of charity, to continue two hours, the last three quarters to be appropriated to speaking of particular experience. Sec. 3 says the society shall meet at convenient times for worship and mutual edification. Sec. 4 appoints the fourth Tuesday of May in each year to elect their servants. Sec. 5 appoints the first Tuesday in February, May, August, and November to transact business.

"Article V. provides for the reception of new members, who must have been previously approved unanimously, and were required to answer in the affirmative on being questioned, (1) As to belief in the existence of God the Creator, and accountability at the day of judgment. (2) Faith in Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah, and that he was sent into the world for the salvation of mankind. (3) That the Scriptures are a revelation from God, and a sufficient rule of faith and practice. (4) A determination to be devoted to God. (5) A punctual attendance on the means of grace. These answers being given, the elder gave the right-hand of fellowship in the presence of the society.

"Article VI. acknowledges baptism as an ordinance of

the gospel; but as to the subjects and mode of administering, each member is left to his own discretion.

"Article VII. is of the expulsion of members, and makes the rule as found in Matthew xviii. 15–17.

"Article VIII. is of laws, and requires the assent of three-fourths of the members present, before the law shall pass.

"These articles close with a declaration of willingness to permit the use of their religious means to Christians of any name, provided the party be first introduced to the elder by a member.

"It is a matter of regret that the first church book of the society is not now to be found. The one now in use begins with a constitution differing from the first, and is dated August 1, 1798. The list of members which immediately follows begins with the date of 1796, May 1, which appears to fix the *day* of the society's being formed. Fourteen names are of this date; and it is not unworthy of notice that of these fourteen, ten are now dead. One soon returned to England, his native country, and has never since been in America; one has for some time been prevented by ill health from taking an active part; one appears no longer interested. So that of the founders, the writer alone is left (June, 1833), an active member of the Society of United Christian Friends. The society first worshipped in a room in the house of Abraham E. Brouwer, but the number of the members increasing, it was judged expedient to build; and a house was accordingly erected near where the free Episcopal church in Vandewater Street now stands. Shortly after the erection of their first house, the writer proposed that the society should be incorporated, but it was not approved. His secular affairs calling him to remove from the city, he was absent part of 1798 and 1799, returning May, 1799. During his absence, Mr. Murray of Boston visited the city and preached, but not in the house of the

society. November 12, 1800, it was determined that a proposition made a month previous to have the society become a body corporate, and to hold an election on the 17th inst. for trustees, should be accepted. And the election was held accordingly on the 17th of November, 1800. On December 3 of the same year, Robert Shaw declined acting any longer as elder. A deputation immediately waited on him to persuade him to continue; but his answer was that he could no longer hold that office for which he found himself inadequate. He and Mr. Brouwer left the society at this time, and their names have opposite them the word *withdrawn*. December 15, 1800, another constitution was adopted, something different from the second, inasmuch as it entirely omits class-meetings. March 24, 1807, the constitution which has governed the society ever since was adopted. It differs from those preceding by omitting the feast of charity.

"When it is considered that the first members of the society had all been members of the Methodist society, it is not to be wondered at that they should have class-meetings and the feast of charity. The first is well calculated for those who know little more of religion than that they desire to flee from the wrath to come; and for such we believe it was first principally intended; and if continued with propriety may be useful to those who have made further progress in the faith. And the feast of charity, as conducted among the Methodists, may, with their views of religion, be very profitable to them. In the Society of United Christian Friends it was a very temperate repast, a friendly, social meal; and its tendency was to refresh the wearied mind, and to cement the bond of brotherhood. The only danger to be apprehended from such meetings is, that in conversation some may be led to express themselves in a way that may appear like debate; and this must ever be unprofitable. If it be asked, Why, then, were the class-meetings and

feasts of charity laid aside ? the answer is easy. Neither of them is the command of God, and therefore not strictly obligatory on men. The first was observed for more than four years, and the last for more than ten years. During this time many members were added to the society who, for various reasons, considered these institutions as not required of God, nor necessary in themselves, and therefore in the formation of the present constitution they were omitted. In June, 1803, the society determined that the writer be ordained as a regular minister, and he was ordained accordingly on the 18th of July in that year." [1]

Mr. Mitchell was a native of the north of Ireland, and in early life was a bookseller. At the time he came out from the Methodist church the form of Universalism entertained by him and by his associates was that preached by Mr. Winchester, but after the preaching of Mr. Murray in New York, alluded to in the extract just given, Mr. Mitchell and the society generally became Rellyans.[2]

In 1810 Mr. Mitchell settled in Boston as the colleague of Rev. John Murray; but after a year's absence, he returned to New York, and was re-settled as pastor of the Society of United Christian Friends. In 1818 they built and took possession of a new house of worship at the corner of Duane and Augustus streets. Mr. Mitchell died Aug. 8, 1834. How long after his death the meetings were continued, if at all, we are not informed. Mr. Cook says, in the letter referred to in the footnote: —

[1] The Christian Universalist, by Edward Mitchell, pp. 25–34.

[2] See a letter from Edward Cook, the last presiding elder of the society, in the Christian Ambassador, May 7, 1853.

"In regard to the society, though dormant, it yet exists. Its property is in the hands of trustees, and when in the providence of God he shall send a preacher like the lamented Mitchell, its members will be gathered from the churches to which they have been scattered, and again form a body of 'United Christian Friends.'"

This was written thirty years ago. The present condition of the society's affairs is unknown.

In the winter of 1796, Dr. Joseph Priestley gave a series of "Discourses relating to the Evidences of Revealed Religion" in the "Church of the Universalists at Philadelphia." They were at once printed, making an octavo volume of 426 pages. The second part of Thomas Paine's "Age of Reason" was published in that city during the delivery of these discourses, and many of its positions were criticised and refuted by Dr. Priestley. In the concluding discourse occurs the following language, showing what he regarded as the teachings of revelation on the subject of human destiny: —

"A familiar acquaintance with the Scriptures will preserve upon the mind a lively sense of God and his moral government. It will continually bring into view, and give you a habit of contemplating, the great plan of Providence respecting the designs of God in the creation of man, and his ultimate destination. You will by this means have a clearer view of the Divine wisdom and goodness in the government of the world, even in the most calamitous events, as in the corruption of true religion, as well as in the reformation of it. You will perceive signs of order in the present seemingly disordered state of things, and will rejoice in the prospect of the glorious completion of the scheme in universal

virtue and universal happiness. Such views of things as these, which will be perpetually suggested by the reading of the Scriptures, have the greatest tendency to ennoble and enlarge the mind, to raise our thoughts and affections above the low pursuits which wholly occupy and distract the minds of the bulk of mankind; they will inspire a most delightful serenity in the midst of the cares and troubles of life, and impart a joy which the world can neither give nor take away" (pp. 422, 423).

At the conclusion of this series of discourses, Dr. Priestley gave another discourse, entitled "Unitarianism Explained and Defended." This was also published, and some portions of it were, it is said, reviewed by Mr. Winchester. Dr. Priestley concluded this discourse with the following manly avowal and argument: —

"Having given this account of my faith with respect to articles of the greatest secondary importance, I shall take the liberty (especially as I have been indulged with an opportunity of pleading what I believe to be the cause of truth in this place) to express my concurrence with the minister and the congregation worshipping here, in their opinion concerning the final happiness of all the human race, — a doctrine eminently calculated to promote alike gratitude to God and benevolence to man, and consequently every other virtue; and since this doctrine is perfectly consistent with the belief of the adequate punishment of all sin, it is far from giving any encouragement to sinners.

"The doctrine of *eternal torments* is altogether indefensible on any principles of justice or equity; for all the crimes of finite creatures being of course finite, cannot in equity deserve infinite punishment. The Judge of all the earth, who appeals to men that *all his ways are equal*, we may rest assured will do that which is *right*.

Nay, *in the midst of judgment he ever remembers mercy,* and he has declared that *he retaineth not anger forever.*

"But I do not lay much stress on particular texts of Scripture in this case, because it does not appear to me to have been the proper object of the mission of Christ or of any other prophet, to announce this doctrine ; nor does it appear that any of them considered the subject in its full extent. But it may be inferred from the general maxims of God's moral government, and from the spirit and tendency of the whole system of revelation. Since all the dead are to be raised, the wicked as well as the righteous, it is highly improbable that this will be merely for the sake of their being punished and then consigned to annihilation, as if they were incapable of improvement.

"No human beings can be so depraved as that it shall not be in the power of proper discipline to reclaim them, so as to make them valuable characters. What great things have the excellent regulations of the public prison in this city effected in this respect! They are regulations worthy to be imitated in all the United States and through the whole world. How often do vices arise from false views of things, occasioned by the circumstances in which men are unavoidably placed, which, therefore, a more favorable situation and better information would easily cure! The natural operation of all punishment here is the reformation of the offender; and if human nature will continue to be the same thing that it now is, it must have the same operation hereafter, and the *time* that is often the only thing wanting to produce its proper effect at present, will not be wanting then.

"Many vicious persons, and especially unbelievers, are men of great natural talents and powers, capable of the happiest exertions if only well directed; and is their Maker incapable of giving them that due direction? After having made use of them for the wise and benevo-

lent purposes of his providence here in promoting, as they indirectly do, the virtue and happiness of others, will he cast them away as of no further use? For, as I have observed, moral as well as natural evils are necessary in this state of trial and discipline. Would not any man be justly censured for destroying any animal that might be rendered useful merely because he was vicious? Or would any parent abandon a child for any fault that he could be guilty of? It would be said that judicious treatment would cure those vices, whatever they were. And is the Divine Being less skilful or less benevolent than man?

"Consider, further, how is it possible for good men to whom the happiness of heaven is promised, to have any enjoyment of that happiness themselves, if those for whom they cannot but have the strongest affection, especially their children and other near relations and friends, be, I do not say consigned to everlasting torments, but even annihilated, or in any other way only excluded from all possibility of attaining such a state as will make their existence a blessing to them? If David lamented as he did the death of his rebellious son Absalom, what would he have felt in the idea of his utter destruction? A parent myself, allow me to speak to the feelings of others who are also parents. But is not God the true parent of us all? Are not our children as much his as they are ours? And is an earthly parent who is deserving of the name incapable of wholly abandoning any of his children? and will God, whose *tender mercies are over all his works* (Psalm cxlv. 9), and whose love and compassion far exceed ours, abandon any of his? Like a true parent, he will ever correct in *measure* and with *mercy*.

"I shall conclude with a quotation from Dr. Hartley's 'Observations on Man,' in which I find the doctrine of the final happiness of all men is ably defended. It is

the conclusion of his great work. 'I have now gone through with my observations on the frame, duty, and expectations of man, finishing them with the doctrine of ultimate unlimited happiness to all. This doctrine, if it be true, ought at once to dispel all gloominess, anxiety, and sorrow from our hearts, and raise them to the highest pitch of love, adoration, and gratitude towards our God, our most bountiful Creator and merciful Father, and the inexhaustible source of happiness and perfection. Here self-interest, benevolence, and piety all concur to move and exalt our affections. How happy in himself, how benevolent to others, and how thankful to God ought that man to be who believes both himself and others born to an infinite expectation! Since God has bid us rejoice, what can make us sorrowful? Since he has created us for happiness, what misery can we fear? If we be really intended for ultimate unlimited happiness, it is no matter to a truly resigned person *when*, or *where*, or *how*. Nay, could any of us fully conceive, and be duly influenced by, this glorious expectation, this infinite balance in our favor, it would be sufficient to deprive all present evils of their sting and bitterness. It would be a sufficient answer to all our difficulties and anxieties from the folly, vice, and misery which we experience in ourselves and see in others, to say that they will end in unbounded knowledge, virtue, and happiness; and that the progress of every individual in his passage through an eternal life, is from imperfect to perfect, particular to general, less to greater, finite to infinite, and from the creature to the Creator.'"

Dr. Huntington's work, "Calvinism Improved," mentioned in the first chapter as having been published in 1796, was the same year attacked by Rev. Nathan Strong, of Hartford, Conn., in a work entitled, "The Doctrine of Eternal Misery Reconcilable with the

Benevolence of God," and a truth plainly asserted in the Christian Scriptures. Mr. Strong had been brought up in Coventry, — Dr. Huntington's residence at the time his book was written, — and his father had been a predecessor of Dr. H. Of the review, the late Rev. Dr. Whittemore said in the first edition of his "Modern History of Universalism": —

"The ground taken in opposition to Dr. H. was, that benevolence in God was not a love of individual happiness, but of the happiness of society, or the greatest quantity of good; and that the endless misery of a part of mankind was consistent with benevolence, inasmuch as it was the means of promoting the general good. But we are unable to see for what reason Mr. Strong's book should ever have been called an *answer*, much less a *refutation*, of Dr. H.'s theory. The latter, so far from denying, had maintained that endless punishment was a doctrine of the Scriptures; he had found fault with Universalists in general for *trifling* with the original word translated forever; and in reference to the question, 'Does the Bible plainly say that sinners of mankind shall be damned to interminable punishment?' he answered, 'It certainly does, as plainly as language can express, or any man, or even God himself, can speak.' Nor did he deny that endless misery was consistent with divine justice. On this subject he was perfectly plain. 'The endless duration of punishment,' said he, 'appears obviously just, no more than we deserve, and not in the least cruel for God to inflict. To argue, as some do, that it is not *just* for God to punish eternally for transient sins in this world, is the perfection of absurdity, and arises from a total ignorance of God and ourselves in the true character and relation of each.' Why a work designed to refute such a theory should bear the

title Mr. Strong gave his book, we cannot imagine" (pp. 385, 386).

Early in April, 1797, Mr. Winchester, who was still in Hartford, preached a sermon from St. Paul's farewell address to the elders of the Ephesian churches (Acts xx. 28-35), under the impression that it was the last he should ever preach. A few days showed that his presentiment had been well founded; he never again entered his pulpit. His disease progressed rapidly, and baffled all efforts of skilful physicians. He felt that death was approaching, but fearing no evil, he contemplated his departure from earth with resignation and even with joy. An eye witness thus described his death-bed: —

"Here was to be seen the most disordered and distressed state of body, with a mind more calm than his most indifferent spectators, serene and brightening at the near approach of death like the increasing light of the morning without clouds, as the dying man called on his attendants to bear witness to his unshaken faith and reliance on that system of the gospel he had so fully published and frequently inculcated from the pulpit. On the morning of April 18 he was summoned to his rest. A few moments before his departure he requested that a particular hymn, 'Farewell, dear friends in Christ below,' might be sung, in which he attempted to join. After a few stanzas his voice sunk in exhaustion. His friends, alarmed, paused. Rallying a little, he said, 'Sing on, — be not afraid, — sing on to the end.' They obeyed; and when the hymn was completed he ceased to breathe."[1]

[1] Stone's Biography of Winchester, pp. 230, 231.

The New England Convention met at Milford, Mass., in 1797. Appended to the circular letter, which is the only document extant, is the following: —

"As a further recommendation, we propose that when our elders are called to travel to places where they are not known, some society or brethren give them a line to signify that they are received by us as preachers of the gospel, and persons of good moral character."

Up to this time, therefore, we suppose that the Convention had not issued letters of fellowship. The plan of government adopted by them at their organization delegated this power, as also that of ordination, to the churches. The full text of the provision on this subject is as follows: —

"Such persons as possess those qualifications and gifts which the Scriptures prescribe for a bishop, and who wish to devote themselves to God in the ministry, shall be invited to preach before the members of the church; and if after trial they shall appear to be under the influence of the spirit of the gospel, and to possess such endowments as are requisite for the profitable exercise of the duty of a bishop or minister, the church shall solemnly set apart and ordain such persons; and a certificate of such appointment shall be to them a sufficient ordination to preach the gospel, and to administer such ordinances hereinafter mentioned as to them may seem proper, wherever they may be called by Divine Providence.

"And as the great design of forms in ordaining ministers is to prevent weak and immoral persons from exercising the ministerial office, we admit ordination by any church in which forms have been observed, to be valid; and when persons so ordained shall apply to become

members of any of our churches, they shall (if otherwise qualified) be admitted, not only as members, but ministers also."

There are no documents relating to the Philadelphia Convention this year.

Mr. Murray published in 1797 an octavo pamphlet of xvi. and 96 pages, entitled, "Universalism Vindicated, being the substance of some observations on the revelation of the unbounded love of God made to the patriarch in the field of Padan-aram (Gen. xxviii. 14), and confirmed by the joint suffrages of the prophets and Apostles, delivered some time since to a society in Boston who statedly worship the only wise God our Saviour." The passage of Scripture referred to contains the promise to Jacob: "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

Two years later, the pamphlet was republished in what was then considered the far west, in the village of Rome, Oneida Co., N. Y. Placed in smaller type it then filled 83 pages, — an undertaking that must have involved no little expense, and which indicates that some believers in Universalism had penetrated that region, and were zealous for the spread of the truth. The sermon is purely Rellyan in its argument and in its interpretation of Scripture figures of speech. One of the opening paragraphs is a good specimen of the latter: —

"In the subject before us we hear the voice from heaven uttered by the Jehovah that stood above the ladder, declaring that the seed of this patriarch should be as the dust of the earth. This figure no doubt points out the innumerable multitudes that should spring from this

favored stock. This figure was used by the same gracious Being when he preached the gospel to the grandfather of this youth; but there he added another most glorious figure. Having turned the patriarch's attention to the earth, and in effect declaring it as impossible to number the individuals that should spring from him as the particles of which it was composed, and having, by fixing the patriarch's attention to the earth, led him to consider the origin of the dusty part of his seed as of earth earthly, he then turned his attention to the heavens, directing him to view the stars, and said unto him, So shall thy seed be. Accordingly we hear an Apostle, under the influence of the spirit of him who spoke to Abraham and Jacob, declaring, as one star differeth from another star in glory, so shall be the resurrection of the dead; thus the seed, how dishonorable and corruptible soever it may have been while bearing the image of the earthly, shall in its resurrection state be honorable, incorruptible, and glorious, bearing no more the image of the earthly, but forever bearing the image of the heavenly; so that even the *vile* body should be changed, and according to the mighty working whereby the Almighty God is able to subdue all things unto himself, be fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Son of God" (pp. 3, 4).

Having shown that the prediction could not have included the descendants of Abraham only, since the blessedness is promised to "all the families of the earth," Mr. Murray continues: —

"As this, of all other subjects, is to us and to all the families of the earth, of the most importance, whether we consider the character of the speaker, the character spoken to, or the characters spoken of, we shall consider this sequel of our subject with peculiar attention in the following order:

"First, the *Seed;* Secondly, What this Seed shall contain; Thirdly, What shall be the portion of the contained; and close with some observations on the whole.

"And first, the Seed. Though we have seen from the figures made use of that the seed cannot be numbered, yet in sundry parts of divine revelation we are led to the contemplation of the *seed* of whom Moses and the prophets spake from the beginning, so that no sooner did the serpent beguile our general mother, than we hear of the *seed* as the bruiser of the serpent's head. Search the Scriptures, saith our Divine Master; *they* testify, saith he, of *me.* But in no part of divine revelation does the Spirit testify more clearly of our Saviour than under *this* character; and that in *this* place we are led to see Jesus in an especial manner exhibited is clear from the Apostle, who, speaking of the gospel preached unto Abraham, saith, 'To Abraham and his *seed* the promises were made — not unto *seeds,* as of many, but unto thy *seed,* which is Christ.'

"Though the seed of Jacob in their individual capacity were for number as the sands of the sea, yet we find them as collected in the Shilo, unto whom the gathering of the people should be exhibited in the singular character, 'I in them, and thou in me, that we may be perfect in *one.* In *thee* and in thy seed,' etc. The name this patriarch was destined to bear was Israel; hence his descendants are denominated the children of Israel. But this name is by the royal prophet applied to Jesus. Speaking in the character of the Messiah, we hear him saying, 'Many a time they have afflicted me from my youth (may Israel now say), yet have they not prevailed against me. The ploughers ploughed my back; they made long their furrows.'

"Though the Scriptures, in which we think we have eternal life, very clearly testify of Jesus as the *only* life of the world in general, or of any individual in it, —

though his character as containing in himself all fulness is in every part of revelation plainly manifested, — yet the question, What think you of Christ? was never more pertinent than at present, especially when we consider there are so many false Christs in the world, who have deceived many. We are taught to believe that the Scriptures are the *only* rule given for our direction; but as they testify of Christ, and as it is in him they all consist, they can be of little use to us except they lead us into an acquaintance with him *whom to know* is life eternal. The Apostle was so sensible of this that he determined to know nothing among the *Corinthians* but CHRIST, and him crucified. Accordingly, though none of the Apostles attended more to the Scriptures, yet he made use of them principally for the purpose of manifesting Jesus, of whom Moses and the prophets spake, who *died for the sins of the people, according to the Scriptures.* And as peace, and rest, and deliverance from condemnation, with many other advantages, are dependent on and connected with believing in Jesus Christ, and as we cannot believe in him of whom we have not heard, it is of the last importance that we attend to the voice that testifies of him. In attending to *this* voice from heaven, we shall find that in him *all* fulness dwelt; in his *human* character the *fulness* of the *human nature;* in his divine character the *fulness* of the *divine nature.* In the former he is the seed, how multiplied soever. In this *seed* dwelt *all the fulness of the Godhead;* so that he is the *only wise* God, and the Saviour of the world; he is the *second Adam,* and the *Lord from heaven.*

"But we come in the next place to consider, Secondly, What this *seed* contains. The Scriptures declare that the first Adam was a figure of the second; it is therefore the Lord from heaven bears the name of *Adam.* Adam was considered by the writers of revelation in a *public,* not a *private* character, and not only acting for his pos-

terity, but containing *in himself* their fulness. This truth appears generally acknowledged, as we frequently hear that *in* Adam all die; nor do we find that *this* truth is called in question by many who deny that in the second Adam all are made alive; but whatever we see *in* the *figure* we have a right to expect in the *substance*, else we could not discover any justice in the figure, according to the plan in infinite wisdom laid. But that Adam contained *in himself* the fulness of human nature, is clear from the death, which, consequent on *his* transgression, passed upon *all* men. If it should be said that death passed upon all men in consequence of all men sinning, we answer, It does not appear from divine revelation, that the descendants of Adam would have sinned if their father had not; besides, we find death passing on them who had not, in their own persons, *sinned according to the similitude of Adam's transgression.*

"But it is not in *this* figure only that we see Jesus. In a very great variety of figures we see Jesus manifested as containing *in* himself the individuals which constitute his fulness, — as the one *river*, composed of innumerable drops of water; the one *tree*, composed of innumerable branches; the one *temple*, containing an infinite variety of materials; the one *bread*, composed of innumerable grains of wheat. What, saith the Apostle, is the bread we break, is it not the *communion* of the *body* of Christ? But what is a communion but a gathering together, so that the people, being like the grains of wheat that represented them, *many* collected *in* the *seed*, may be *one in* Christ, or the fulness of his body?

"But beside the many speaking figures made use of by the Spirit of God to illustrate the truth of, and as it is *in*, Christ Jesus, which for brevity's sake we are obliged to pass over, there are many plain, clear, positive portions of divine testimony which directly lead the mind of the honest inquirer to the knowledge of the truth *as*

it is in Jesus: as, It pleased the Father that *in* him (Jesus), the *seed,* all fulness should dwell; God hath appointed a day in the which he will gather *all* things *into one*; Of him (the Jehovah) are ye *in* Christ Jesus; Accepted *in* the beloved, complete *in* him; We are his workmanship, created *in* Christ Jesus; For he is our peace, who hath made both *one;* For to make *in himself* of twain *one* new *man,* and that he might reconcile both in *one body;* In whom (Jesus) all the building (not buildings), fitly framed together (not asunder), groweth into an holy *temple* (not temples) *in* the Lord; *In* whom you also are builded *together* for an habitation (not habitations) according as he (the Jehovah) hath chosen us *in* him (Jesus); *In* whom we have redemption, *in* whom also we have obtained an inheritance.

"Jesus having by the grace of God tasted death for every man, and being by the power of the divine nature raised from the dead, ascended in the *same* nature in which he descended; and we are now taught to consider *this* nature, thus raised and seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, as the next in dignity to the divine nature; so as to be as much *one* with the divine nature as the soul of any individual of the human kind is with the body it inhabits. The head of *every man* is thus raised far above all principalities, and powers, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in *this* world, but also in *that* which is to come. God hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church (the called out), which is his *body* (not *bodies*), the fulness of him that *filleth all in all.* Accordingly the Apostle, or rather the spirit speaking *by* the Apostle, informed the people, informs us, that 'Though we are dead in trespasses and sins, yet God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us *together* with Christ, and hath raised

us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places *in* Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace (pp. 5–9).

"But if the promised seed included in himself — as the *second Adam*, as *every man's head*, as the *new man* — the fulness of the human nature in his birth, so he did in his life; otherwise it does not appear that he could, in consequence of his obedience to the law under which he was made, become the Lord *our* Righteousness, which is one of the names by which he is properly called; and if, as the second Adam, he had not in himself the fulness of the human nature, the righteousness of God which he the *only wise God* our Saviour wrought out, would not, could not, as we conceive, with any degree of propriety be declared unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference. Again, if the people had not been *in* him, in all he wrought, they could not be the righteousness of God *in him*, nor could he, according to justice, be the *life* of the *world*; for neither the world in general, nor any individual of the world, can be the subject of life, according to the rule of divine truth and justice, without that righteousness which alone gives a legal title thereto. If, saith divine truth, thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments; this is according to the Law, — and heaven and earth shall pass away before one jot or tittle of the Law shall pass unfulfilled. When Jesus came to seek and to save, it was not in violation of the Law. I came not, saith he, to *destroy* the Law, but to fulfil it. Hence then, *he is the life of the world* in *consequence* of the *union subsisting between him and the people*, as exemplified under the figure of the *head* and *members* of which the spirit spake, when by the Apostle he said, *I would not have you ignorant that the head of every man is Christ.* Now, as in nature what is done by the head is with spirit, justice, and propriety said to be done by the *whole man*, so what was done by *Jesus* as

every man's head, made under the Law, is according to strict justice in God's sight considered as *done by every man*. The revelation of this is indeed glad tidings to *every* creature.

"But we are not only bound to believe that the fulness of the human nature was in the *seed*, our second *Adam*, in his *birth* and in his *life*, but also in his *death*. This is on the very best authority confirmed. Our Saviour, speaking of the death he was to die, said, *And I, when I am lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto me.*

"This, the spirit informs us, he spake signifying what death he should die; but certainly not merely with respect to the *manner* of his death, — for he could have died as an individual in *that* or *any other* way, without drawing all or any individual of mankind unto himself. But he drew all men unto himself that *in his* death they may *all die*, according to the Law which had declared, *the soul that sinneth shall die.* But having *thus* drawn *all men* unto himself, the love of Christ constrained the Apostles to judge that if one *died for all*, which they were assured the Saviour did, then were *all dead.* This is, perhaps, what was intended by the Prophet Isaiah, when he said, *Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty!* Were we taught to consider the prophets as mere historians sent to foretell or relate events as they respected only the temporal concerns of the children of men, then we should glean but little knowledge of our Saviour, or salvation *by him*, in consulting them; but if we credit him of whom they spake, we shall find *they testify of him* in the various characters and scenes in which he was ordained to appear. Now, as when he was *lifted up from the earth*, in his crucifixion, and on that occasion drew all men unto himself, the Prophet, in the beautiful language he was directed to make use of, pointed out this grand event by saying, *Behold, the Lord maketh the*

earth empty! Should we forget that the prophets testify of Jesus, and read these Scriptures without the smallest expectation of finding *him*, we should be very much perplexed to know how to keep peace with the prophets, in the plain language of their revelation. We do not see at any period of time this prophecy *literally* fulfilled; and should it be confined to the land of Judea, there would still be a difficulty, as we do not find that this spot of earth was ever in *this* point of view made empty: it was constantly occupied by the natives or by strangers. In fact this, as well as sundry other parts of divine revelation, can never appear what divine revelation must of necessity be, *true*, except we consider it as true *in Jesus, in whom all things consist.* If, when our Saviour was suspended on the cross between heaven and earth, he contained *in himself*, as the *second Adam*, the fulness of the human nature; if Jew and Gentile were reconciled *in one body* on the cross, — then the Lord made the earth empty. The land, saith the Prophet, shall be *utterly* emptied, and *utterly* spoiled, for the Lord hath spoken this word. If it should be said that after it was declared, *The Lord maketh the earth empty; maketh it waste; he scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof*, that scattering abroad the inhabitants thereof does not correspond with the idea of their being collected in their head when he was lifted up from the earth, we answer, their being *scattered* was an event that took place soon after the crucifixion, according to the divine prediction; and so far is this from opposing the truth as *it is in Jesus*, that, coming in connection with it, it serves as a corroborating evidence of the former truth.

"Again, in the prophecy of Jeremiah, 'Thus saith the Lord, take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations to whom I send thee to drink it; and they *shall drink*, and it shall be if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say

unto them, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Ye shall certainly drink.' And we are expressly told, all the kingdoms of the world which are on the face of the earth shall drink this *cup*. It would be extremely difficult to find this truth anywhere but in the garden of Gethsemane, when the head of every man — the part of the body which drinks — said, 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.' Should it be said he drank the bitter cup *alone*, let it be observed it is the *head alone* that drinks, but not in a *separate* state from the body; hence as the head *tastes* for the *whole body*, so Jesus, as the *head* of the *body tasted death for every man*, which *every* man was the fulness of his body. Can it be doubted that this was the cup our Lord adverted to when the fond mother petitioned for the preferment of her sons, and the Saviour asked them, Are ye able to *drink* of the *cup* that *I shall drink of*, and to be baptized with the baptism I am to be baptized with? They, ignorant, as his disciples generally were at that period, of the full purport of their Lord's sayings, answered, we are able; and he, in his *own* way replied, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup, and be baptized with the baptism. But if this *cup* was the cup put into his hands to drink in the garden alluded to, and this baptism was, as is generally believed, the *baptism* of his *sufferings* and *death*, where or how could this divine testimony be fulfilled any way but in himself? The people, we are told, were *crucified* with Christ, buried *with* him by *baptism into death*. There, indeed, the word of the Lord was *divinely accomplished*.

"But it is not in the *birth*, the *life*, and *death* of Christ alone the fulness of Jew and Gentile was found, but in his resurrection also; for as many as were *in him* on the *cross* were *in him* in the grave and in *hell;* and as many as were *in him* constituting *his fulness in hell* and *in the grave*, were *with* or *in him* in his resurrection state.

This he was assured of when he said, Thou wilt not leave *my soul in hell*, nor suffer thy *holy one* to see corruption. The Spirit expressly declares that we are *risen with Christ.* Jesus appeared the second time without sin, namely, the *sin* of the *world*, which was *laid upon him*, which he bare *in his own body* on the tree, and which, as the *Lamb of God*, he *took away, putting it away by the sacrifice of himself;* for though as an individual he *was without sin*, yet as the aggregate of human nature, he bare all *their sins*, and as *one* with *them, justly suffered* for them ; but having by his *one sacrifice put away sin, finishing transgression*, making an end of *sin*, in the *account* of *justice*, he appears in the *fulness* of his *body* the second time *without sin*, and presents *them* before the *Father without spot ;* and to the *fulness of this body* the divine nature speaks when he says, This is my *beloved Son, this day* have I *begotten thee.* The Apostle, instructed by the spirit who takes the things of Jesus and shows them, said, He hath *begotten* us again unto a lively hope by the *resurrection* of Jesus Christ from the dead, in which *sinless* resurrection state the Apostle had, and every one taught by, and a believer of God, has, the *answer of a good conscience toward God.* The Apostle had not this answer of a good conscience toward God by the putting away the filth of the flesh, but by the *resurrection* of Jesus Christ from the dead, in *whom* he was presented *without spot*, and *blameless in love.*

"But it is not in the *birth*, the *life*, the *death*, and *resurrection* of Christ alone the fulness of his body was, but in his *ascension* also. It was the same body that was *born* that *lived ;* it was the same body in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead that *died ;* it was the *same* body that *rose* from the *dead ;* it was the *same* body which arose from the dead that ascended into that heaven *which must contain him until the times of the restitution of all things ;* it was the same Jesus that *descended*, who, after

his resurrection, *ascended* far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. Hence the Spirit by the Apostle assures us we are not only *raised up with Christ*, but are made to sit *together* in heavenly places *in* Christ Jesus.

"Thus we find, according to the Scriptures, that Jesus, having entered into the holiest of all with his own blood, presents the people *in himself*, and they are *accepted in* the beloved. The figurative high-priest with the figurative sacrifice, in *figure* carried all the tribes of Israel into the holiest of all, and *in* his own person presented them before the mercy-seat. If the high-priest was accepted, the tribes of Israel were accepted, for their high-priest presented them on his breastplate before the Lord; hence the people who were on the other side the rail, in their individual capacities, were kept in suspense till they heard the sound of the bells that hung between the pomegranates on the bottom of the sacerdotal garment, but on hearing these they knew their high-priest lived, and because he lived they would live also, and they shouted for joy; so every believer in the high-priest of our profession will rejoice with joy unspeakable when they hear his voice from within the rail saying, *Because I live ye shall live also.*

"But we come in the third place to inquire, what is the portion of all the families of the earth consequent on being *in* this seed? Eternal praises to the Father of the spirits of all flesh, who assures us that the portion of all the families of the earth *in* this SEED is blessing, — not blessing and *cursing*, or blessing *some* families and cursing *others*, or *blessing at one time* and *cursing at another;* no, he that teaches his disciples *to bless* and *curse* not, but even to *bless them by whom* they are *despitefully* treated, though *they really suffer* in consequence of such treatment, will assuredly act on his own principles.

"But, first: In the promised seed all the families of

the earth are blessed with righteousness. This they cannot have anywhere but in this seed; for ever since the 'Fall no mere man hath ever kept the commandments of God.' It follows that ever since the Fall there have been none righteous anywhere but in this seed; so, also, can no family of the earth avoid having this righteousness in this *seed*, for the seed is holy, and if the first-fruit is holy, so is the lump. Hence the name whereby he is and shall be called is the *Lord our* Righteousness. Righteousness is a *perfect* obedience to the righteous law of God. No *mere* man ever produced this; but Jesus did. Hence he is become the end of the law for righteousness, not only unto all in general, but also to them that *believe* in particular. To all, then, who were unable to obey the law of God in their *own* persons Jesus is given as the law-fulfiller; and as the righteousness of God, which is *Immanuel's obedience* to the law, is *unto all*, and *as God so loved the world as to give them his Son*, this Son thus given is with strict propriety denominated *the Lord our Righteousness*. And this, with strict truth, every family of the earth and every individual of each family may say, and each and every individual *ought* to believe this for himself; and therefore he who believeth not this is justly condemned for not giving credit to this truth.

"Secondly. All the families of the earth are in this seed blessed with *justification*. This is the certain consequence of the righteousness they were by the grace of God in the *given* Son blessed with. It would be an abomination to justify the wicked; hence when we hear of the *ungodly* being *justified*, we find it is by the *blood* of *Jesus*. It is therefore that the assembly of divines who composed the shorter catechism assure us that 'justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, — only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith.' It is *imputed before faith*, but *re-*

ceived by faith. It is imputed to all, but received by none but them who believe. Hence these glad tidings are preached to *every* creature, that *all men might see* in *this* act of God's free grace the things which make for their peace.

"Thirdly. In this SEED all the families of the earth are blessed with sanctification, or holiness, *without which no man can see the Lord.* Considering the *uncleanness* of *all* the families of the earth, and the impossibility of the *unclean* standing in the presence of Him who is of *purer eyes than to behold iniquity,* the blessing of all mankind with *sanctification in* Christ Jesus is an act of as *free* and as *much grace* as the blessing them with justification. But the gracious God never blessed any individual with justification that he did not bless with sanctification, for *whom he justified he sanctified;* and it is of God who sent Jesus to bless every one of us and all the families of the earth, by saving *us* and *them from sin,* that we are *in Christ Jesus,* who is made unto us sanctification. Without sanctification there could be no glorification; it is only the pure in heart can see God; but as no family of the earth can boast of *heart-purity* in their own persons, as is clear not only from divine revelation but from the testimony of all God's children from the beginning of the world, it is as clear that it is only in the Seed, which is Christ Jesus, that any family of the earth can be in the present state blessed with sanctification; and from the same divine revelation it is as clear that this blessing cometh on all the families of the earth *in Christ Jesus:* otherwise he could not be the *Saviour of all men.*

"Fourthly. In this seed all the families of the earth are blessed with *life.* This by the transgression of the first Adam was forfeited; but in the *second* Adam, and by his *obedience,* is recovered; and the life thus recovered is by the favor of God *given* to the *world.* The wages

of sin is death, but the gift of God is everlasting life. *God so loved the world he gave them his Son,* and in this Son he gave them life. The world to whom this Son was given was dead in trespasses and sins, but in giving them the Son the lover of the world gave them *life;* and therefore this gift of God is emphatically styled *the Life of the world.*

"As death and darkness in the language of revelation are so nearly related as frequently to be considered synonymous, so light and life seem expressive of the same thing. In the Word that was made flesh, we are told, was life, and this life was the light of men, which is afterwards called the *true light* which enlighteneth *every man* that cometh into the world. When Christ, saith the Apostle, *who is our life,* shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Because, saith the Saviour, *I live, ye shall live also. In* this seed, as the dwelling-place of all generations, we *live;* and as this seed, which is Christ, is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, the life which the families of the earth have in him must be an *everlasting life.* Nor can any of the families of the earth ever lose this life, because it is hid with Christ in God; and as it is only in him any of the families of the earth, however excellent they may be in themselves, can have life, he that hath not the Son hath not life, nor can he see life. But God so loved the world he gave them the Son; nor will he ever take this gift away from the world, for the *gifts,* as well as the *callings,* of God are *without repentance.* God will never, therefore, repent that he so loved the world as to give them his Son, and in this Son life; having loved the world he will forever love them, for he changeth not; he is of one mind, without variableness, or even the shadow of turning.

"Fifthly. In this seed all the families of the earth are blessed with peace. Peace *is* made for them *by the blood*

of the cross. The *council of peace* was *between them both,* — the *head of every man,* which is Christ, and the *head* of Christ, which is the *divine nature.* There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked; hence, as the commission of sin constitutes this character, and as there is no man that liveth and sinneth not, it is clear that no man can be *justly* entitled to *peace in himself* or *out of* this SEED. God's covenant is called a covenant of peace, but Jesus, the promised SEED, is declared to be the covenant of the people. It is therefore we hear the prophet declare, This man shall be *our peace,* even when the Assyrian cometh into our land. When the angels were sent to proclaim the birth of the world-Saviour they proclaimed peace on earth, and this was glad tidings to *all* people. The Saviour, therefore, sent forth his servants to preach peace to them that were nigh and to them that were afar off; and when he was going for a little time to leave them he said, *My peace I leave with you.* These things, saith the Saviour, have I spoken, that *in me ye might have peace.* The Apostles who preached peace by Jesus, who, they assure us, was *Lord of all,* inform us we are called to peace; that the kingdom of God is joy and *peace,* the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, and *peace.*

"Jesus *himself is our peace,* who hath made *both one,* Jew and Gentile, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, having abolished *in his flesh* the enmity to make *in himself of twain one new man, so making peace,* and that he might reconcile both *in one body* by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby, and came and preached *peace* to you which *were afar off,* and to them that were nigh; for through *him* we both have access *by one spirit unto the Father.* Thus we find that the fulness of Jew and Gentile are the subjects of the *peace* wherewith they are blessed in the *seed* of Abraham: the enmity is abolished in his flesh; both are reconciled in *one body.* Yea, the blind and the ignorant are the

subjects of this peace. Hence the things which are hid from their eyes are the things which not only *make for peace*, but for *their* peace from whose eyes they were hid.

"When the God of peace would comfort his people he told them that their seed should inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate places be inhabited; for, saith the Lord, thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name, the God of the *whole earth* shall he be called. In a little wrath, saith the Jehovah, I hid my face for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee; and Jehovah said to the servant that he upheld, to his elect in whom he took delight, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel. I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be *my salvation unto the ends of the earth.*

"Again: Thus saith the Lord, The Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One, kings shall see and arise. Wherefore? Because they are faithful? No, because of the Lord that is faithful. Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee; and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant for the people. For what purpose? — to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages, that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in high places; they shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor sun smite them, for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them. Behold, these shall come from far. But who are these prisoners? — children of darkness, on whom the God of the whole earth should have mercy, and who should, in the greatness of his goodness, through the instrumentality of the Seed, his servant, lead these blind by a way they knew not, — even the way of peace, which is the way everlasting.

"But, Sixthly: In this seed all the families of the earth are blessed with *reconciliation.* Hence we find the reconciled God committing to the Apostles the ministry of reconciliation, charging them to tell the world that God was in Christ reconciling them unto himself, not imputing unto them their trespasses; commanding them to tell every creature that Jesus was made sin for them, that they may be made the righteousness of God *in him.* And that this reconciliation was a matter begun, carried on, and completed on behalf of the lost world, in the Saviour of the world, without the creature's knowledge or assent, is plain from the Apostle's beseeching the people he made this declaration to, to be reconciled to God. So that we see, as clear as we see the sun at noonday, that the peace made on the cross confirmed the reconciliation on God's part, on behalf of those who in themselves were enemies to God. But this reconciliation was preached unto them, that they may be on believing it reconciled to God. Thus we see that God *is* reconciled, and well pleased for *his* righteousness' sake *in* whom he was reconciling the world unto himself; and in order that this may be done in a way perfectly conformable to every rule of equity and justice, the whole world of mankind were, to the eye of the just God to whom they were accountable, collected in their *Head,* Jesus, — nor they alone; their iniquities were collected there also. The Lord laid on *him* the iniquities *of us all,* and not only the iniquities of us all, but *all* our iniquities; for the spirit of God assures us that Jesus bare *all our sins* in his own body on the tree. And that there may be nothing to prevent a reconciliation taking place on the principles of strict justice, it pleased the Lord to bruise *him* on whom and in whose body the iniquities were; and *his* soul, being exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, was finally made an *offering for sin;* so that *he as a sin offering* was delivered up to *death for*

us all. Jesus therefore *finishing* the *transgression, making an end of sin, putting it away* from before God *by the sacrifice of himself,* the cause being thus removed the effect ceases; God is reconciled; his justice has all it demanded; his truth is fulfilled; mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have embraced each other. The consequence is, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good-will to men!

"Thus, my beloved friends, we are assured by the voice of Jehovah from above the ladder, that, how wretched soever his offspring may be in this distempered state of things, however low they may have fallen, how far soever they may have been led captive by their lusts (which war against their souls), how long soever they may be suffered to bear the image of the earthy, — the lover of their souls who so loved them as to give them his Son, and in this Son grace, before the world was, hath assured us that in consequence of all the families of the earth being in this seed blessed, they shall be brought ultimately into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God; they shall be brought out of the estate of sin and misery in which they are, and brought into a state of salvation from all these sins and sorrows by a Redeemer; for we have heard the voice of our faithful Creator saying unto the patriarch, *In thy* SEED *shall all the families of the earth be blessed.* May we venture to believe this? Is this indeed the word of Jehovah? It is or it is not. If it is not, what reason have we to believe any other testimony delivered under the same signature? If it is not true, how then can we be directed by this rule, which we have been taught to believe — 'The only rule given for our direction?' Are we blessed with a revelation in which we gain the knowledge of what we never could have known without it, and yet are we not allowed to take this revelation as it is given? How then can it properly be called *a revelation,* if it does not *reveal* the

mind of the speaker? If God did not mean what he said to Jacob, how are we ever to find out what he meant? We have no other revelation from him, and if we have no other from him, by what rule can any one determine what he meant? But should any one undertake to reveal, as the mind of God, not only what is not expressed, but something diametrically opposite thereto, this could not be called divine revelation, inasmuch as the revealer would be merely human. Should it be said that many parts of divine revelation cannot, on many accounts, be clearly understood; suppose this should be granted, does it follow that there is *no part* of divine revelation that can be understood? Should this be the case, then it would clearly follow that we have *no revelation* at all. But if there is any part of revelation that may be considered *clear and plain*, it is the subject before us; and as it is the *gospel* ordained to be preached to *every creature*, we should suppose it was designed as *a revelation to every creature*" (pp. 14–27).

The foregoing seems to be the clearest written of any of Mr. Murray's published discourses, and gives a comprehensive view of his peculiar theology, which was all based on his theory of the union of Christ with humanity. He regarded it, we think, as his best presentation of his opinions, and was evidently flattered by the reception given to it by the public. In sending a copy to the Rev. Robert Redding of England, he thus speaks of it: —

"November 8, 1797.

"I now send you another book. I send it to *you*. I give you in this another proof of my good opinion of you, and my confidence in you. I do not consider you a believer in the doctrine contained therein; yet I send it to you. I did not consider some of the clergy of this

town believers of the gospel which is the subject of this pamphlet; yet I sent it to them, and was not a little surprised when one of them, a Doctor Clark,[1] told me that though he would not say that his brethren of the clergy believed *every* thing contained therein, yet he had the pleasure to assure me they were all very much pleased therewith, and said they thought it did me much honor. But I am told by one of their order that there are but three of the clergy in this town who are not believers of the gospel God preached to Abraham. I frequently meet with ministers at public entertainments, who in a whisper tell me they have been for some years believers in the doctrines I preach, but are afraid to tell their people so. So it was of old. There were many of the chief rulers who believed, but they professed it not openly. However, the time will come when they will not be afraid to make an open confession of it; when they will not stagger at the promises through unbelief, but being taught of God, they will be strong in faith, giving glory to God.

"I need not tell you, my loved friend, that whatever this book contains I believe is the truth of God. If I did not I should not publish it. If I did not I should not preach at all; or, if I did, I should not know what to do with the Scriptures. If I did not, I should differ from all God's holy prophets, by whose mouth God spake ever since the beginning of the world. But believing as I do, I feel my heart disposed to love God and my brother also. Nor can I censure any one for not believing; for faith is the gift of God. In fact, I have often wondered that so much has been said respecting believing, and so little said of the matter to be believed. Let me see the truth, I can no more help believing it

[1] Probably Rev. John Clarke, D.D., successor to Dr. Chauncey. See Chapter I.

than I can help breathing; and till I can see it, till I am able to see the truth of any proposition, I can no more *believe* it than I can make a world. I conceive, therefore, there cannot be a more inconsistent character in the world, than an uncharitable, censorious believer of the truth as it is in Jesus. But no more of this. You will read my feeble attempt at investigating truth, and in your own dear good way, tell me where I am wrong. You know I shall take very kindly everything from you."[1]

Of Rev. Dr. Clarke, Mr. Murray writes to another friend: —

"April 9, 1798.

"I suppose you have heard of the sudden death of Dr. Clark. I saw him on Saturday; he was never better in mind, in body, or estate. He preached on Sunday well, very well; in the afternoon he preached again — not long; he began his text: 'Thou art holy, O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.' He proceeded but a little way before he was called; for he dropped down in the pulpit; had no more sense; died before next morning. Happy man! he left the world in the meridian of his days and fame. There was a pompous procession from his house to his meeting, and Dr. Howard prayed, and Dr. Thatcher preached. . . . I have lost in Dr. Clark the best friend I had in the clerical character, at least in this town; his death is indeed a public loss; but soon, very soon, we shall follow. I believe I owe Dr. Clark the kind treatment I have lately met with from the clergy of this town, and this has been pleasing to me. How friends drop! Who would have thought him a subject for apoplexy? . . . I paid with great sincerity the tribute of respect to Dr. Clark's mem-

[1] Universalist Quarterly, October, 1869, pp. 424, 425.

ory yesterday afternoon that was his due. It was this good man I fixed on the last time I was sick, and till his death, to attend my funeral. It must, in conformity with custom, I presume, be attended. I shall pity whoever are asked to officiate; at least I now pity them; I shall not then. There is too much parade on these occasions."[1]

[1] The Ladies' Repository, vol. xiv. p. 191.

CHAPTER VII.

1798 - 1800.

The Philadelphia Convention of 1798. — The New England Convention in 1798. — S. Delanoe's Pamphlet. — Rev. Ariel Kendrick's Reply to Delanoe. — Rev. Samuel Shepard's Pamphlet against Universalism. — Sin, and not Sinners, Punished. — Mr. Murray's Letter to Hosea Ballou. — Mr. Ballou in Mr. Murray's Pulpit in Boston. — Mrs. Murray disturbed. — Mr. Jonathan Balch her Mouth-piece. — The Committee of the Society apologize to Mr. Ballou. — Mr. Murray's Views on the Subjection of the Son. — Mr. Ballou refuses to give Encouragement that he will Settle in Boston. — The New England Convention in 1799. — Rev. Walter Ferriss. — Rev. N. Stacy's Account of the Convention. — The Eastern Association Organized. — Captain Joseph Pearce. — Rev. Thomas Barns in Maine. — The Suicide's Funeral. — Correspondence between Rev. Joel Foster, A. M., and Rev. Hosea Ballou. — Mr. Ballou's Interpretation of Scripture at this time. — Mr. Ballou's Belief in Future Punishment. — New England Convention in 1800 Appoints Committees on Ordination and Discipline. — Issues Letters of License. — Rev. Edmund Pillsbury. — Rev. John Foster. — Rev. Miles T. Wooley. — Rev. Edward Turner. — Rev. Joshua Flagg. — Rev. Edwin Ferriss. — His "Plain Restitutionist." — Legislation of the New England Convention. — The Temperance Question. — Universalist Preachers in the United States at the Close of the Eighteenth Century.

THE session of the Philadelphia Convention in 1798 was held in May. It was called, and the time designated, by the church in Philadelphia, as appears from the letter addressed by that church to the Convention : —

"In consequence of our city's being visited last fall with an awful sickness, and not knowing but its fate might be of the same nature in that which is coming, we took under consideration the propriety of recommending a Convention for this year at the same time that was fixed at its first establishment. And conceiving it to be

proper, took the liberty of addressing those letters which you received for that purpose. We would recommend that the Convention make a permanent establishment as to the time of their convening in future."

Probably the sickness spoken of had prevented a session in 1797, as the New Britain church said in their letter: "We do much approve the conduct of our sister church in Philadelphia in proposing the present Convention."

The Philadelphia, Kingwood, New Britain, and New Hanover churches reported to the session in 1798. The Minutes are imperfect, and impart little knowledge of the business transacted, beyond the fact that the Convention adjourned to meet in May, 1799.

The New England Convention met in September, 1798, in Hardwick, Mass. Neither records nor circular letter, if the latter was issued, are now to be found.

Sometime in the year 1798, a writer by the name of S. Delanoe issued a pamphlet in reply to William Huntington's "Advocates for Devils Refuted," an English pamphlet directed against Winchester, and which had been re-published in Philadelphia in 1796, and industriously and extensively circulated. We have never seen Mr. Delanoe's pamphlet, and have no further knowledge of him; but he was probably a resident of Vermont or New Hampshire. Rev. Ariel Kendrick, a Baptist preacher in Woodstock, Vt., published the same year, "A Brief Reply to a Pamphlet lately published by S. Delanoe [under the fictitious name of 'Candor'], in favor of Universalism." From this "Reply" we understand that Mr. Delanoe was a Rellyan.

The same year Rev. Samuel Shepard, pastor of a Baptist church at Brentwood, N. H., published "The Principle of Universal Salvation Examined, etc.; in an Epistle to a Friend." It appears to have been addressed to some one who had formerly been a Baptist, but was now a Universalist, and probably a preacher of Universalism, and who professed to believe that sins, and not sinners, are sent into punishment. We get no clew to the name or location of this person. He is the only writer from whose publications we have seen any quotations indicating the belief that sins, and not sinners, were punished. Mr. Murray, it will be remembered, was quoted under date of 1791 (chapter iv.), as attributing this belief to some Universalists.

In October, 1798, Mr. Murray addressed the following letter from Boston to Mr. Ballou, then in Hardwick:

My dear Brother, — You are sensible, I presume, that some time past you delivered in this town some matters not *quite* pleasing to me. I cannot act a hypocritical part, and appear what I am not; I have since, however, not only heard you deliver the truth, but have been much delighted by the account I have heard from Gloucester of your labors there. You will see by what follows I am sincere in my *commendations* as in my *censures;* and as I expressed my dislike when I felt it, I am now going to give you full evidence of my *hearty* approbation and my readiness to promote your *interest.* I am going for a few weeks to the southward. I have recommended *you* to my friends to supply my place. I have spoken of you in such a manner as is pleasing to them. I wish *sincerely* you may come unto them directly, and I wait only your answer to set out. I cannot say how long I shall be absent; I contemplate five or six weeks. Were I a *single*

man I would leave my *whole* support with you as a compensation for your time; but as I leave two-thirds of me behind, I shall give about half of my promised support. I am willing to allow you ten dollars a Sunday while I am absent. Your *living will cost you nothing;* you may visit the adjacent parts of the country in the vicinity of Boston all the week if you choose it, or visit the friends in this town, where you will be *sure of a welcome.* You will preach to many *strangers here,* and be by this means more abundantly known; and, I presume, if you fare no better than I do when I journey, you will gain *more* towards the support of your family here for the time you continue here, than you would for the same time anywhere else; so that in every point of view it will be your interest to come here. Should you have made other engagements you can plead the necessity of attending on the present occasion as a mere temporary matter, which may not occur again, and that some time back you encouraged your friends in this town to believe you would supply them should they stand in need of you. You will have the goodness to write directly to let us know what we have to depend upon, and if you cannot come send Mr. Coffin or Mr. Lathe. I should hope, however, that you will be able and willing to come yourself; and should you come, Mrs. Murray, who had the pleasure of hearing you sundry times in Gloucester much to her satisfaction, will be glad to see you at her habitation as often as possible. I hope the presence of the Saviour will be with you, warming your heart and the hearts of your hearers; and should I ever return I trust we shall rejoice together in this hope. I remain,

Your affectionate friend and devoted servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

Appended to the letter was the following from one of the members of the society: —

Dear Brother, — I have only to add that a number of our brethren have requested me to request you to come if possible. They are very earnest for it, and I doubt not but you will be much gratified in the friendly visit. For my part I must beg your compliance with Mr. Murray's request. I am,

Your sincere friend and brother, Moses Hale.[1]

The proposal was accepted by Mr. Ballou, and he preached ten Sundays in Mr. Murray's pulpit. An incident connected with the close of this engagement is thus narrated by the late Dr. Whittemore, whose authority for the statement was Mr. Ballou himself: —

"On the last Sunday of the engagement, in the afternoon, he took occasion to call up the passage 1 Cor. xv. 26–28, in which Jesus is spoken of as delivering up the kingdom to God the Father. Mrs. Murray, by the way, believed that the Son who is to deliver up the kingdom to the Father was the 'son of perdition,' and that God would finally succeed in getting the kingdom out of his hands. Mr. Ballou believed that it was the Son of God who would deliver up the *mediatorial* kingdom to God, when he had brought all things into subjection to himself, and God should then be All in All. Mr. Ballou did not desire to oppose the sentiments of Mrs. Murray; but it came out of course that he believed that the son was the Son of God; and that as the Son was to deliver up the kingdom to the Father, he himself could not be the Father. The sermon was received with extraordinary attention throughout. The concluding prayer was offered, and Mr. Ballou arose to read his last hymn. Mrs. Murray (who, by the way, was a most uneasy spirit) had employed the time of the concluding prayer to beckon a Mr. Tirrell to her pew, whom she despatched to the singing-seats to request

[1] From a copy preserved among the papers of the First Universalist Society, Boston, in the Universalist Historical Society's Library.

Mr. Jonathan Balch, who sat there, to give notice that the doctrine which had been preached by Mr. Ballou on that afternoon was not the doctrine which was usually preached in that house. Just as Mr. Ballou rose to announce the hymn, Mr. Balch, to the great astonishment of the congregation, broke forth from the singing-seats with an annunciation in substance as follows: 'I wish to give notice that the doctrine which has been preached here this afternoon is not the doctrine which is usually preached in this house.' Mr. Ballou listened attentively to Mr. Balch's remark, and after saying, 'The audience will please to take notice of what our brother has said,' proceeded to read the hymn, which was sung. The people were indignant at Mr. Balch, who had so unnecessarily disturbed the congregation and treated Mr. Ballou with rudeness. A meeting of the parish committee was called by the sexton being sent round to notify each member thereof before he left his pew; and that committee, in company with a number of the leading members of the society, waited on Mr. Ballou in the evening, and apologized for the coarseness and indecorum of Mr. Balch, and stated that the congregation decidedly disapproved what he had done. In the old meeting-house it was customary always for a part of the congregation to pass out through the vestry on the back part of the house, and as they passed, some of them exchanged thoughts with some warmth on the subject of Mr. Balch's interruption, and generally in condemnation of it. Such were the facts in regard to Mr. Balch's proclamation against Mr. Ballou's opinions. It was a matter of Mrs. Murray and of Mr. Balch as her instrument; but the congregation at large were chagrined and wounded by the transaction, and the committee took immediate measures to assure Mr. Ballou of this fact." [1]

[1] Life of Rev. Hosea Ballou, vol. i. pp. 146–148.

Mr. Murray did not hold with Mrs. Murray that it was the "son of perdition" who was to be subjected to the Father, but the human race collectively. In a sermon on 1 Cor. xv. 28, he says: —

"What are we to understand by subduing? Undoubtedly, bringing into subjection. But bringing into subjection implies previous rebellion. It is impious, therefore, to suppose that this son to be brought into subjection was Christ Jesus. Was Christ Jesus, in his individual character, ever in a state of rebellion? Yet we are told, most *irreverently*, that, at the final consummation of all things, we shall behold a universe of *Deists;* for Christ Jesus shall be brought into a state of *subjection.* But such conclusions can only be formed by those who have never learned, or who have forgotten, that the characters, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are merely designed as an accommodation to our limited understanding, and are but various exhibitions of the same one eternal God. . . . The offspring of God, the human family, was first exhibited in the singular character; in this character they sinned, and in this character they must be saved: accordingly we are admonished to have a *single* eye. (Matthew vi. 22.) 'The light of the body is the eye; if, therefore, thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.' And hence, Jesus Christ, as the head of every man, is called the light of the world; and when all things shall be subdued unto him, who is the light of the world, then shall the Son also, who was made subject to vanity, be subjected to vanity no more. Human nature, in the aggregate, shall be brought into subjection to him who is able to subdue all things unto himself; until that period, partial reforms may take place, but the day of retribution will be the day of *final subjection.*"[1]

[1] Letters and Sketches of Sermons, vol. iii. pp. 277, 278.

Dr. Whittemore says: —

"The ten Sabbaths which Mr. Ballou had spent in Boston during Mr. Murray's absence, had given the Universalists of that town an opportunity to become better acquainted with him than they ever had been before. The congregations while he preached were certainly not diminished at all; and he was regarded by many of the congregation as an extraordinary man for talent and knowledge of the Scriptures. He was at this time thirty years of age. Several individuals, who had been much impressed with his talents, his eloquence, his opinions, and the clearness with which he stated and proved them, suggested to him, if he would remove to Boston and become the pastor of a new society, they would at once proceed to erect a house for him. But his decision was instantly formed. 'I cannot,' said he, 'do anything to injure Brother Murray, nor the beloved society to which he ministers.' And he expressed the hope that the subject might not be mentioned to him again."[1]

During Mr. Murray's visit to Philadelphia, — then the Capital of the general government, — he renewed his friendship with President John Adams, and made the acquaintance of many men then eminent in political life. He thus writes: —

"Philadelphia, February, 1799.

"I dined with the President every week, drank coffee with him sometimes; was frequently invited by, and was able once to accept the invitation of dining with, the Secretary of State [Timothy Pickering], in whose company, however, I had frequently the pleasure of dining in company of sundry other great characters. On New

[1] Life of Rev. Hosea Ballou, vol. i. p. 162.

Year's day, I paid my respects, as did hundreds besides, to the President, by whom I was introduced to the Ministers and Secretary of War, etc. On the President's introducing me to Mr. Henry [James McHenry], Secretary of War, he observed, pointing to your humble servant, 'This gentleman has performed a great feat since he has been in this city, — next to a miracle ; he has drawn the Vice President [Thomas Jefferson] to a place of worship.' I had told him that the Vice President was one of my audience on the past Sunday morning. The Secretary of War replied, 'That is not the only feat of that nature he has performed to *my* certain knowledge; he has drawn many out to his place of worship that have not been in any other for many years.'"[1]

In 1799, the New England Convention met in Woodstock, Vt., — Hosea Ballou, moderator, Walter Ferriss, clerk. This is the first mention of Walter Ferriss among Universalists. He was a native of Pawlings, Duchess County, N. Y., where he was born Jan. 20, 1768. Before entering the ministry he was a land surveyor. His ordination occurred in 1801, at which time he was pastor of "the United Societies of Charlotte, Hinesburg, and Monkton, Vt." As will be seen hereafter, he was eminent in the denomination for several years. His death took place at Ferrisburgh, Vt., April 6, 1806.

The proceedings of this Convention are not on record. From an interesting account of it by the late Rev. Nathaniel Stacy, who was present, we give the following paragraphs: —

"I shall not attempt to describe the sensations I experienced on approaching and entering the house of

[1] The Ladies' Repository, vol. xiv. pp. 191, 192.

worship, for it would be impossible. It seemed as though light beamed in matchless glory from above, and heaven had thrown wide open its portals of beauty! The words of the speaker were like a precious healing balm to my soul. There were but three preachers present, — our venerable father, Hosea Ballou, now living in Boston, Mr. William Farwell, and Mr. Walter Ferriss. Both of the latter have long since been numbered with the congregation of the dead. Mr. Ballou preached; and one of his discourses was on the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, and it swept away the last vestige of doubt and darkness from my mind. I followed the clergymen around as closely as possible, so as to catch every word; ventured into the council-chamber in the intermission, where they, together with many other friends, were assembled, and where also the excellent choir, led by the celebrated teacher Mr. West, performed several excellent pieces adapted to the occasion; and the preaching and the singing and the social converse so enraptured my soul, that, young and bashful as I was, I could hardly refrain from crying out, in the language of the celestial messenger, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men.' And I really felt as the entranced disciples did at the transfiguration of the Saviour, 'It is good for me to be here.' And my astonishment was excited beyond measure when I came to look around among the attendants who thronged the room, and saw several of my acquaintances, who appeared as happy as myself, and whom I had supposed to be violently opposed to the doctrine; and to whom, consequently, I had never dared to express a thought, after I became favorably impressed with a belief of its truth.

"I now felt myself in a new world; and although among old acquaintances, surrounded by new friends, bound together by stronger ties than I had ever before experienced. This meeting had a very happy effect in

this country. Besides its tendency to lead many into the belief of the truth who had never before entertained a favorable opinion of it, and to establish those who were wavering, it brought together congenial minds, and introduced them to an acquaintance with each other, which served to strengthen and embolden them in the cause, to extend their influence, and enlarge the sphere of their action; by which means the cause of divine truth advanced with greater rapidity.

"An incident occurred at this meeting, which I think is worth recording, because it shows the bitterness of spirit which actuated the opposers of this great salvation, and the effect of a calm, dignified, and fearless perseverance in the spirit of kindness. I was not an eye-witness, but I was told of it; indeed, it was a subject of common observation and remark, and had a very salutary effect upon the reasonable part of community; for it led them to make a comparison between the influence of the two doctrines. The friends of Universalism had applied to the proper authorities for the use of the court-house for the meeting, and obtained their consent; and the doors were accordingly opened. But the sheriff of the county, — one Rice, a bigot, without religion, as his character too plainly testified, — undertook to frighten them away by placing himself before the door with a drawn sword in his hand, no doubt thinking that the importance of his office, and a little blustering, would break up the meeting. But at the appointed hour the clergy, with Mr. Ballou at their head, walked deliberately to the house; and as they approached the door where this wonderful majesty of law had placed himself and was flourishing his broad-sword, Mr. Ballou, with his wonted urbanity and pleasantness, addressed the little man in the language of the Saviour, 'Peter, put up thy sword into his place,' and walked by the shame-smitten sheriff into the house. I was told that he hung down

his head, and without uttering a word walked off to his house, — probably with a less-exalted opinion of his own importance than when he placed himself at the court-house door." [1]

There are no Minutes of the Philadelphia Convention for 1799, and the probability is that no session was held.

This year a new association was organized in what was then the district of Maine, and called the Eastern Association. The town of New Gloucester, which was within its bounds, had been settled a few years before by a few families from Gloucester, Mass., many of whom had been connected with the Universalist congregation. Among these was Captain Joseph Pearce. For several years, as there was no preaching near enough for the settlers to attend, Mr. Pearce met with his neighbors at each other's houses, on Sundays, for religious worship and conversation. It fell to his lot to take the lead in these services; and before long it was discovered that there were so many Universalists in New Gloucester and the adjoining towns that he was empowered to obtain a minister of their faith to take up his abode with them. At once he wrote to his brother William, on Cape Ann, for assistance, who proposed to Rev. Thomas Barns to visit the district, and made generous offers of assistance, if he would settle there. Mr. Barns had been supplying the Gloucester pulpit most of the time since the spring of 1794, but his family remained on his farm in Woodstock, Conn.; and he was therefore pleased with the prospect of a field of labor where he could give his personal attention to farming, and have

[1] Memoirs of the Life of Rev. Nathaniel Stacy, pp. 55–57.

his family with him. Accordingly, he visited the district in the fall of 1798, and concluded to make it his home, removing there in the winter of 1799, and locating on a farm in the town of Poland, where he continued to reside till his death, in October, 1816. His engagements in moving to Poland were, that he should preach at Norway, Falmouth, and New Gloucester, every fourth Sunday. The remaining Sabbath he was employed in adjacent towns, occasionally preaching at Livermore, Turner, Danville, Freeport, and Poland. In January, 1802, he was ordained at Gray, over the united societies of Norway, New Gloucester, Falmouth, and Gray. In October, 1799, delegates from these societies met in Gray, and organized the Eastern Association.

The following incident in the early ministry of Mr. Barns in Maine illustrates at once the state of religious feeling among the so-called Orthodox of that day, their confessed inability to comfort the mourning, and the great light and cheer which Universalism imparted to the bereaved: —

"In one of the towns where an aged Orthodox minister had been located a number of years, resided a very respectable family, mostly members of the church, consisting of husband and wife, or father and mother, and several grown-up children. Among the latter was a son, the pride, the hope, the joy, of the family. From some unknown cause, this son became delirious, and was for some time confined, and every means employed to restore him to sanity and happiness. At length, symptoms of returning reason appeared, and though far from being fully restored, it was deemed best to allow him his liberty, and carefully watch all his movements, to prevent

him from doing harm to himself or others. For a time he was vigilantly watched, and strong hopes of perfect recovery entertained. But one day, while the family relaxed their vigilance, he watched his opportunity, entered the barn, got a rope and hung himself, and was dead when discovered. This was a most awful and afflicting stroke to the family.

"The father, in the overwhelming agony of his emotions, goes to his minister, tells him the sad tidings, and requests him to attend the funeral and administer the consolations of the gospel to himself and family. His venerable pastor listens to his request, pauses, drops a tear of pity, and replies, 'Brother, I cannot comply with your request.' 'Why not?' 'Because I have been long and intimately acquainted with your family. I know the strong affections you entertained for your son; the sad and awful manner of his exit. I know not of one word of consolation for you in the gospel; and my feelings will not allow me to preach as duty would require on so sad an occasion!' 'What, then, shall I do?' 'Go to the neighboring town of ——, where Brother —— has lately been settled. He is a comparative stranger to you and your family. He can do his duty on such an occasion without experiencing the distressing emotions that I should.'

"Accordingly, the afflicted father posts to the minister of the neighboring parish, makes known his misfortune, and requests him to attend, and preach the funeral sermon. 'But why do you not get your own minister?' He frankly tells him that he has applied and been refused, and the reasons therefor. 'Well,' says the young Orthodox clergyman, after a pause, 'if your own minister cannot preach and do his duty on this occasion, neither can I; for, like him, I know not of a single text in the whole Bible that can afford you the least consolation; and I cannot preach this funeral sermon.'

"With a still sadder heart, the grief-stricken father returns, — again visits his pastor and implores him with tears to attend, and preach the funeral sermon of his departed son. 'I cannot — I *cannot*,' is the reply; 'my feelings will not allow it. Alas! I pity but I cannot comfort you.' 'What shall I do? Alas! what can I do?' exclaims the father, in unutterable agony. 'I know not,' exclaims the minister. 'I cannot advise you. Stop — yes, yes, I can. I will tell you what to do. There is old Father Barns, the Universalist, who lives in Poland; he will attend and preach. Go for him at once. If there is one text, one word of consolation, for you in all the Bible, he will find it. Get him; the church shall be opened; the members will attend; I will attend and hear him.'

"For the last time, the father starts on his melancholy task of procuring a minister to attend the funeral of his son. He calls at the house of the Universalist minister. 'Is Mr. Barns at home?' 'He is, sir; he is threshing grain at the barn.' He approaches and enters. No sooner does the venerable farmer-minister see him than he drops his flail, approaches, and takes the afflicted man by the hand, saying, 'My dear friend, I am happy to see you. I have heard of your misfortune, — a severe and trying affliction. I sympathize deeply with you. But God doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men; but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies.'

"The afflicted man then made known the object of his call, and Father Barns readily agreed to go and preach at the funeral. The time arrives. The meeting-house is open. The occasion being extraordinary in the comparatively new country, a vast concourse assembles, including nearly or quite all the members of the church and many from other churches, with both the clergymen who had declined preaching. The venerable Barns enters

the pulpit. All eyes and ears are open, and especially those of the aged Orthodox pastor, who, the reader will believe, was really anxious to have the mourners comforted, though he knew not himself how to comfort them. Deep and solemn silence prevails. The introductory services are appropriately gone through, and the preacher turns to and reads his text, 1 Cor. iv. 5: 'Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God.' Scarcely had the text been pronounced, when the aged Orthodox minister clapped his hands in ecstasy, crying aloud, '*He's got it, he's got it!* — the very text of all the Bible for the occasion.'

"The preacher then went on to illustrate and apply his text, showing that weak and short-sighted mortals, not understanding the dark dealings and mysterious dispensations of Divine Providence, are too prone to doubt or distrust the Divine Goodness, to arraign his wisdom and question his justice or benevolence; that we now see but in part and know but in part, but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away; we now see as through a glass darkly, but hereafter we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known; and when all the designs of God in apparent ills are seen through, and his benevolent purposes understood, all that is now dark will become light, — the very counsels of all hearts will be seen through, and the reasons why God permitted such counsels to exist be understood; benevolence will be seen to be at the bottom of all Jehovah's designs, and every man shall have the praise of God's unbounded goodness in his heart as well as on his tongue.

"The sermon took strong hold of the whole congregation, and produced a most powerful and happy effect. A

Universalist society was soon established in the place, and the stated and regular ministration of the truth enjoyed, dating from the time that Father Barns preached the above sermon at the funeral of the unfortunate suicide." [1]

In 1799 a pamphlet appeared, entitled, "A Literary Correspondence between Joel Foster, A. M., Minister of the Congregational Society in New Salem, and Hosea Ballou, an Itinerant Preacher of the sect called Universalists. In which the Question concerning Future Punishment and the Reasons for and against it are considered."

Mr. Foster, although a Congregationalist, was evidently no Calvinist, but decidedly Arminian in his theology. He seems, too, to have had a hope that the doctrine of endless punishment might perhaps not be strictly true at last; not because it was not threatened in the Bible, but — as he approved Archbishop Tillotson's theory — because God had power to remit his threatenings, if he so willed. It is quite probable that his position may have been generally understood in the community before his correspondence with Mr. Ballou commenced, and possibly Mr. Ballou may have been aware of this when he first addressed him. The correspondence commenced before either had any personal acquaintance with the other. Mr. Ballou wrote the first letter, Oct. 4, 1797, telling Mr. Foster that he had heard of his character "as that of a judicious and pious clergyman," and adding, "I, being young, have need of the assistance of those who are more learned

[1] Rev. Dolphus Skinner, in the Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate, Jan. 5, 1844.

and experienced than myself." The questions which he propounded were:

"First. Is it possible for any being not to answer the final purpose intended by God in his creation?

"Second. Do the Scriptures teach us that God intended the eternal misery of any of the human kind, or to glorify himself in their endless wretchedness?

"Third. Was it the mission of Christ to die for, and finally save, the human race?" (p. 6.)

Mr. Foster answered on the 9th of October:

"This day I received your very unexpected favor of the 4th inst. You are a stranger to me, but I am disposed to believe that your desire for a correspondence was perfectly well-meant. The apparent spirit of candor, which characterizes your letter, merits the honor of my notice, — if it can be thought an honor to you" (p. 5).

After criticising the verbal form of some of Mr. Ballou's statements, Mr. Foster proceeded to answer his questions: —

"'Is it possible for any being not to answer the final purpose intended by God in his creation?' As a philosopher, or as a divine, I am willing to give you my opinion upon this question, namely, that it is not possible. Nor am I ignorant what inference you will be ready to draw from it. But before you proceed to make any conclusion from it, you will do well to recollect that philosophers and divines may differ in their opinion of what they call the final purpose of God in the creation of man. Whether it did at all extend to individual actions, and the final appropriate consequences of them, has been much of a question; or whether it was merely the purpose of God to make men intelligent and free agents, and to endue them with a strict philosophical and moral

liberty. If we agree that the latter was the real and true purpose of God, then the necessary consequence is, that they are capable of working out their own happiness or ruin under such means of probation as an all-wise and gracious Creator should see cause to institute. But if we suppose the purpose of God extended to and necessitated each individual volition and action, then we reduce men to the condition of mere machines, and throw down all distinction between virtue and vice" (pp. 8, 9).

"I have no objection to your second question, as being a proper theological question, namely, 'Do the Scriptures teach us that God intended the eternal misery of any of the human kind?' etc. In answer to this, I do not think that the Scriptures say, in so many words, that God intended the eternal misery of some of the human kind; nor do I think it strictly just and proper to say, that it was the antecedent, unconditional intention or decree of God, that any of the human kind, in a *personal acceptation*, should be eternally miserable. But I know of no way to avoid saying that the gospel does threaten eternal destruction, punishment, or misery to certain *characters* of our race. Just as our laws and government threaten capital punishment to certain offenders, but do not antecedently designate the *individuals* who shall suffer such punishment" (pp. 9, 10).

The third question Mr. Foster thought susceptible of a division. He had no hesitation in affirming "that Christ died for the whole human race;" but that all men would be benefited by his death, he would not assert; but seemed to hold the contrary opinion. He did not commit himself to affirming the strictly endless duration of the sinner's punishment. His summing up was: —

"It is very possible that, after all I have had leisure to write, you may still be fixed in the opinion that it is incongruous to believe God will everlastingly punish any of his creatures, under whatever predicament, and may still solace yourself in the contemplation that all will be brought to happiness in some future distant period in the divine economy. I am not authorized to say that such a belief will have any ill effect upon your heart or life; nor have I any aversion to the doctrine, if it can be found in the holy oracles; nor am I very solicitous to be convinced of the truth of it, even if it be true, or to preach it to others. If there is to be a chance for the condemned to emancipate themselves from a state of punishment, they will doubtless know it when they come to that state; and to tell them of it beforehand might only abate their awe and dread of divine punishment, which in all probability would be no great service to them" (p. 12).

Mr. Ballou's second letter, dated November 2, is here given in full, that the peculiar bent of his mind at that period may be fully understood, and especially that we may see the manner in which he was then interpreting Scripture, and feeling his way along towards the more rational exegesis which he afterwards adopted: —

"To add to the pleasures of this morning, I have the happiness of the reception of your much-wished-for favor of October 9. I am happy, very happy, that my letter gained your approbation as 'perfectly well-meant;' for, notwithstanding any inaccuracy that might appear in my questions, they were in simplicity and sincerity devoted to one whom I considered as an able informant.

"You are good enough, Sir, to certify me that you were not disobliged by the trouble I gave you. I am happy, Sir, in that; and I assure you I would not disoblige you

in soliciting a continuance of our correspondence, for I consider myself more than compensated for my labor — not trouble — in your favor already obtained.

"You will not take it amiss if I proceed to make some remarks on those parts of your letter which to me appear the most essential. In the first place, of the inaccuracy you see in my statements. I acknowledge the temperate sweetness in which you treat this subject, and cannot say but that an apology might justly have been expected. However, I shall beg leave to insert certain reasons which still remain in my mind in favor of the statement. I need not remind you that my statement does not urge that those questions, *justly answered*, designate the Christian faith in every particular, nor even in some principal points; but that they do *in some measure*, I argue from the following reasons: First, the question, Is it possible for any being not to answer the final purpose of God intended in his creation? justly answered, is pertinent to the idea of the power and wisdom of the Creator, which I may justly say are essential to the Christian faith, and are among the names or titles of our Redeemer. Now observe, although this first question does not so particularly refer to the goodness of God, yet the idea of power and wisdom is contained therein. With regard to the other principal communicable attribute of the Deity, which is love, it is briefly comprehended, or at least *in some measure*, in the other two questions; for if we consider the Scriptures as a divine revelation, — which I do most religiously believe, — the question, Do the Scriptures teach us that God intended the eternal misery of the human kind, or to glorify himself in their endless wretchedness? justly answered, has in some measure an allusion to his goodness, or kindness to the human race. The last question, *justly answered*, would, I think, be very explicit in the Redeemer's process. Now, Sir, if the power, wisdom, and goodness of God in creation and

redemption are not *in some measure* the foundation of the Christian faith (I write with diffidence), I doubt whether I have ever believed like a Christian.

"Notwithstanding what I have written on this subject, I am not altogether ignorant that the Christian faith retrospects as well as anticipates. Now with regard to what the Christian faith views in a retrospective sense, there are certain facts comprehended which are said in Holy Scripture to have had an existence, particularly those which relate to the process of Christ. But, farther, I consider that the Christian faith retrospects farther than even prophecy concerning the process of Christ, and contemplates, or the mind by faith, the all-gracious will of our heavenly Father in creation, on which particular the Scriptures are not silent; and when we consider the Christian faith as anticipating, it centres in the before-mentioned properties of the Deity, viz., wisdom, power, and goodness, — in a word, the fulness of the plan of God as it respects man in a spiritual sense, so far as it can be rationally understood by us, is, I conceive, comprehended in the Christian faith.

"I would not be understood, by anything that I have written, that I consider your observations on this particular as ill-meant, but would rather beg leave to dissent a little, or confess myself in the dark respecting it.

"To my first question you say, 'As a philosopher, or as a divine, I am willing to give you my opinion that it is not possible.' You then observe you are not ignorant of what inference I shall draw from your answer. It appears that you had an idea of my inference, provided I had drawn it before I had recollected certain differences which exist in the opinions of philosophers and divines respecting these matters. Dear Sir, do you think my inference will be differently drawn on account of this consideration? I assure you, no; for my inference, I hope, will be according to your very ingenious

answer, that is to say, that the ultimate end and design of God, which he intended in the creation of man and all other beings, cannot fail of being accomplished.

"Now, after my inference, I have an observation to make on the different notions and opinions of philosophers and divines on the will of God as it respects volition and action. Observe, Sir, however the will of God respects sinful volition or action, whether little, none, or much, it does not determine the *final* intention of the Creator; for the consequence of sinful volition and action, which according to the Scriptures is misery and woe, is subsequent to action; and I cannot conceive that any philosopher or divine could even have an excuse for believing or supposing that the *final* intention of the Creator can stop short of the last event which concerns the creature; for if so, we must suppose that the Creator has constituted beings for a longer duration than he had any eventful purpose depending.

"I cannot but observe on the machinery of man, supposing that to be the truth concerning him. You say that such an idea throws down all difference between virtue and vice. This idea, Sir, you consider as philosophical; but on what principle, or why, does this destroy that difference? Philosophy, you are certain, teaches us that fixed laws bring forward or into existence different circumstances, qualities, or operations. These circumstances may have different names, as virtue and vice are different in name.

"Would you pardon me, Sir, if I should appear ignorant enough to suppose that what you have written on my second question does not include an answer? You say, 'Nor do I think it just and proper to say that it was the *antecedent, unconditional* intention or decree of God that any of the human kind, in a *personal acceptation*, should be eternally miserable.' Now you are certain that what is here quoted from your answer does not

say that God did not, or that he did, intend the eternal misery of the human kind in some way or other; and what you have said concerning the Scriptures teaching eternal misery does not determine the question whether God intended them thus to suffer. May I tell you, Sir, that you mistook a certain statement of your own for the question? At least, I may say I consider it so. The question was not whether man by his impenitency could make himself eternally miserable; it was whether the Scriptures taught that it was God's will that they should be thus wretched. I have here an occasion for an observation for which I am happy to be obliged to you: 'I do not mention this inaccuracy because I have any pleasure in little criticisms,' but because I think it necessary that questions of importance should be answered particularly, according to their merit.

"You will indulge me, Sir, while I endeavor to show wherein I think the Scriptures you quoted do not allude to what you seem to apply them. I have, according to your very charitable idea, read those passages which you so carefully reminded me of with candor; and did I believe that the Scriptures taught the idea of eternal, or never-ending, misery, I could not suppose that those passages had an *allusion* to it. The first you quote is in Matthew xxv. That Christ was laboring, in this chapter, by the means of parables, to show the change of dispensations, is obvious; that is, the close of the law dispensation and the opening of the gospel. In the parable of the virgins this idea is clearly to be seen. Observe, he saith, verse 10: 'and the door was shut.' It is written of this bridegroom that he hath the keys of David, and openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth. And here we view him as closing the first dispensation, or shutting the door of the law, at which the stumbling ones of Israel have knocked ever since, but are not able to open it; for it is said he shut-

teth and no man can open. What follows in the parable of the virgins is a just description of the awful situation of Israel thus blinded; after this is introduced the parable of the talents, in which certain particulars of the above-mentioned event are illustrated, the one talent referring to or signifying the law of Moses, which law, though it was good coin, — that is, holy, just, and good, — yet being given to man in the earthly character, in which character no man but Christ ever fulfilled its divine precepts. Now they to whom it was given, being judged by the mouth of the law, were condemned; and then follows the same in effect as to the foolish virgins. The two talents figure John's dispensation, which being committed to him whom the Lord was pleased to make faithful, was profitable even to John; therefore he testifieth that as the friend of the bridegroom his joy was fulfilled; therefore he entered into the joy of his Lord. But observe here, it did not belong to him to take the one talent. No; none but he who came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it, even Christ, who had the five talents, could take the law from the earth, magnify it, and make it honorable; and none but he had power to obtain the one talent. He in the next place proceeds to show, by the parable of the sheep and goats, who were to be judged when he came in his glory, which glory signifies his mediatorial character. The better to time this event, we observe what he saith (Matthew xvi. 28): 'Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here who shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.' The particular coming of Christ in this parable is that of his coming in the gospel dispensation, with his ministers or apostles, who were the angels here meant; which coming and judgment began at the day of Pentecost. What we learn by the sheep and goats, in this passage, are believers and unbelievers; what we understand by all nations being gathered before him is that all were

before the gospel dispensation, or that *that* dispensation would fall on them all. What we learn by the right hand and left is law and gospel; as Christ is the man of God's right hand, the right hand represents the gospel, the left hand the law. Now he who believeth in Jesus, heareth his voice, in gospel language, saying, *in* gospel language, Come, ye blessed of my Father; enter into the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, etc. And we may observe that the gospel speaks the same language to all; but alas! the unbeliever is still under the law, and hears the voice of the Judge, from the mouth of the law, saying, Depart, ye cursed, etc. And then follows the same torment, in effect, as was denounced in the other parables.

"With regard to what you said on the duration of the misery of the wicked, which solution you draw from the same word's being applied to it as is applied to the happiness of the saints, little need be said, seeing you acknowledge that you are not to be informed that this word is sometimes applied to circumstances and things which are not strictly eternal. I will therefore only give you the criterion on which I try this point: Although this is not to be determined from the bare word, yet we may try it on plain Scripture rule. Let us ask, then, Can misery continue any longer than the cause continues? Answer: No. In the next place, What is the cause of misery? Answer: Sin. In the next place, Will sin ever be destroyed, or will it endure to all eternity? Answer: 'Seventy weeks are determined on thee, and on thy people, in which he will finish sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness,' etc. Now let us ask, What is the cause of the happiness of the saints? Answer: Righteousness, even that of Christ's. Now observe, he finishes sin, which is the cause of misery, and brings in everlasting righteousness, which is the cause of happiness. Now, as it is impossible to prove that righteousness will ever

come to an end, the happiness of the saints will continue. 'Because I live, ye shall live also.' Although I consider this point fairly investigated, yet I will remind you of one text which in itself is conclusive to this effect (Rev. xxi. 4): 'And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain,' etc.

"The next passage you quote to me is that in Luke xii. In this passage the same thing is meant as in those parables before explained. Observe: 'When once the master of the house hath risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without and knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us,' etc. Here we view him as before, shutting the door of the law, and the Jews who were blinded, as before observed, knocking at that door; then it is said to them the same in effect, as is said to them in the other parables. You may observe something of this saying, speaking of the way of life, or the strait gate, verse 24: 'For many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able;' observe, they seeking to enter in at the door of the law were not able.

"Then follows an account of the collecting of the Gentiles from the east, west, north, and south, and of their sitting down in the kingdom of God, while the Jews were cast out. And he closes this passage by saying (verse 30): 'And behold there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.' That is, in other words, 'Publicans and harlots shall enter the kingdom of God before you;' which intimates that they should enter afterwards. The next Scripture to which you refer me is that in 2 Thess. i. You quote to me what is said from verse 3 to 10; but my observation will be particularly on the everlasting destruction mentioned in verse 9. This coming of the Lord Jesus in flaming fire must mean his coming in the spirit of the gospel;

for this flaming fire must be of an heavenly nature, or Christ and his angels would not be found in it. But the particular mistake generally made in the explanation of this passage is that of the creature's being banished from the presence of the Lord, — which is an impossibility, — for that of the punishment's proceeding from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. Now observe, the presence of the Lord destroys all sin and false conceptions, our self-righteousness, etc.; and this is punishment to the creature, as saith the Apostle: 'If any man's work be burned, he shall suffer loss;' but observe, 'he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.'

"The last passage you quote in vindication of eternal misery is Rom. xiv. 15. Dear Sir, is it not an alarming idea to suppose that the weight of eternal things hangs on the caprice of a man's eating a piece of meat a little uncharitably? — 'Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died.' Now the Lord saith to Israel, 'O Israel! thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help.' How much easier would you suppose it to be for the whole house of Israel, thus destroyed, to be helped, than one whom another had destroyed with his meat?

"You say, it still remains to be proved that all men will ever obey Christ, etc. To prove this, I need recite but one passage, and that is, saith the Lord, 'Then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call on the name of the Lord, and serve him with one consent.'

"Suffer me now to observe, though you very generously say, to my third question, that Christ died for all men, etc., yet you do not answer the question whether it was his mission finally to save all mankind. You observe that there are two questions in my third; then most certainly they each deserved an answer. Observe, whether to die for, and finally save, were both in the mission of Christ, is but one question.

"Now, Sir, although I could not wish to trouble you, yet, while I thank you for your very kind letter, I can do no less than desire a farther correspondence, if your necessary avocations will admit. And, Sir, should you please to write again, I should be very happy if you would answer those questions in my former letter which remain unanswered, — if you consider them so. In this I would submit to your judgment. Also some questions which I shall here state, leaving you, Sir, to judge of what denomination they are: —

"First. Did God know, from eternity, each event which would take place in time, even containing the idea of each volition and action of his creatures?

"Second. Was it possible for anything to fail of being, which God, with an absolute knowledge, knew would be?

"Third. Did the Father send his Son into the world to die for those whom it was impossible should be saved?

"Kind Sir, if what I have written contains any idea disrespectful to you, I pray you would consider it as unmeant in me.

"Do not consider that what I have written on those passages to which you refer me was written for your instruction; but that you might know why I could not accommodate them to what you seem to.

"P.S. Pardon whatever you see illiterate" (pp. 13–26).

Mr. Foster's reply to these questions was: —

"I will answer them to the best of my knowledge, and so explicitly that you shall not again be at a loss for my meaning.

"To your first question I answer, I know not.

"To your second, Yes.

"To your third, No" (pp. 30, 31).

In Mr. Foster's next letter he says: —

"I will conclude by asking you two questions, in my turn, both naturally suggested by something dropped in your answer, viz.: —

"First. Do you believe there is any moral difference between virtue and vice? or any difference but in name only?

"Second. Do you believe in any punishment at all after this life?"

Mr. Ballou answered the first question, "Yes, if I understand the question." And the second, "No." Subsequently, the parties met on the road to Orange, and engaged in conversation on the subject of their letters. In a letter of later date Mr. Ballou says: —

"If you recollect, Sir, in the little opportunity which we had on the road, I observed to you, that I did not believe in future misery, because it was a matter in which I was not established; and therefore could not say that I believed that in which I was not established.

"I am now satisfied in the idea of a future state of discipline, in which the impenitent will be miserable."

Mr. Foster's next letter was his last. He says: —

"I recollect what you observed, on the road to Orange, concerning your not being established in the point respecting any punishment after this life. You now profess yourself 'satisfied in the idea of a future state of discipline,' etc. I am at a loss on what grounds you obtain this satisfaction; or how you can know that the miseries of the future life are *disciplinary*, and not rather *strictly penal*."

In Whittemore's "Life of Ballou," copious extracts are made from this correspondence; but Mr. Whittemore was unable to procure a complete copy of the

pamphlet, and so could not give Mr. Ballou's final letter. It was as follows: —

"Your last valedictory letter (as you intend it), you must know, leaves our correspondence in a very unfinished state, on my part, provided you publish the epistles. On perusing your last letter but one, I conceived that our correspondence on the subjects brought forward might not be so profitable as on the particular idea of the general restoration. I did not answer your letter in particular, but observed that the subjects were of a nature which I had rather not debate in public.

"You inform me that my desire not to have our correspondence published is untimely, as you have put the first part into the printer's hands. On account of some strokes in the former queries, which respect the system of fatality, which are undecided in sentiment, I choose not to have them published. However, I have no particular aversion to having them published, as the reader will understand that I do not contend for the strict idea of fatality as it respects the *particular actions* of mankind.

"But it is of necessity, Sir, that I answer your last but one more particularly, if you publish it, as I was not particular in my last to you, having an idea of coming more particularly on a different query. But I shall be concise, observing only on two points, which refer to my main query: The first is, the way which you take to exonerate or free yourself from my inference. The way you have taken is, in effect, to say that God has no final intention to make his creatures happy in the enjoyment of himself, nor miserable by being excluded his favor. This, sir, is indeed the only way to free yourself; but what freedom do you enjoy in this? It is saying, that the final intention of Jehovah, respecting his creatures, does not extend so far as their final existence! and that

his intention respecting man affects him in time, but not to all eternity.

"Lastly, I will only connect with this idea what you have said respecting the foreknowledge of God, in which you profess to believe in his positive foreknowledge of all events; but you say that his foreknowing all events did not make them certain or necessary. Whether his foreknowing the events made them certain or not, it is evident that they were certain, or it could not be said that God certainly knew them; for God could not know that an event would take place, if that event was uncertain. If all events that ever exist were certain, — as must be the case if God had a positive knowledge of them, — then they must be considered as unavoidable by the creature.

"Whether God, from eternity, took particular cognizance of all minute events, is a question in my mind; but that he did of all events which concern our eternal state, I firmly believe. Consider, Sir, your own idea of God's foreknowledge, connected with your idea of his final intention respecting his creatures. Here you make his knowledge extend farther than his final intention, and that if any of the human race are endlessly happy, he *unconditionally* knew it, but did not *unconditionally* determine it; also, that if any of the human race are endlessly miserable, he positively knew it, but did not positively determine it.

"Thus I end, thinking it not proper, in this correspondence, to answer your last, as you did not expect it, but rather stated your queries for my peculiar advantage, for which I am obliged to you, Sir, in gratitude.

"Wishing you, Sir, divine peace in spiritual experience, and all who may read these queries everlasting consolation and good hope, I remain, yours and theirs in love."

In 1800 the New England Convention so far departed from the Philadelphia Convention's "Form of Church

Government," which it had adopted in 1794, as to take the matter of license, fellowship, ordination, and discipline into its own hands. Seven of the nine votes passed at this session were on these subjects. "Letters testimonial of license to preach" were granted to "Miles T. Wooley, Edward Turner, Joshua Flagg, and Edwin Ferriss." "Fellowship" was granted to "Edmund Pillsbury, John Foster, and Samuel Mead;" and provision was made for the "ordination of Walter Ferriss," and a committee was appointed "to examine the credentials of applicants for ordination, and to ordain, if so requested, in the recess of the Convention; and if circumstances possibly admit, that Brother Miles Treadwell Wooley be gratified in his request for ordination, when accompanied by proper testimonials from the Connecticut societies." A committee of discipline was also appointed, and charged to investigate a particular case which had been brought to the notice of the Convention.

Rev. Samuel Mead, we have spoken of in the first chapter. Rev. Edmund Pillsbury was a convert from the Baptists, and was living at Northwood, N. H., where he had been settled over a Baptist church in 1779. He became a Universalist about 1797. No particulars in regard to his life have been preserved.

Rev. John Foster was a native of Stafford, Ct., and was the son of Rev. Isaac Foster, pastor of the Congregational church in West Stafford. The son was a Congregational minister at Paxton, Mass., and subsequently at Taunton, and was dismissed from the pastorate in the latter place in 1799. He then became a schoolteacher in Stonington, Ct., where he embraced Univer-

salism, and for a while preached in the city of New York. Dr. Francis, in "Old New York," says: "I have heard many speakers, but none whose voice ever equalled the volume of Foster's. It flowed with delicious ease, and yet penetrated everywhere. He besides was favored with a noble presence." On his appearance in New York, permission was sought for his occupying the pulpit of the church ministered to by Rev. Edward Mitchell; but the request being denied, a place of meeting was opened for him in Rose Street, and afterwards in Broadway, near Pearl. He continued there two or three years, and then resumed his old labor of school-teaching. He died at an advanced age in Norwich, Ct., his later years not fulfilling the promise of his youth. His only publication was a pamphlet of forty-eight pages, entitled "Universal Salvation, Argued in Four Discourses, delivered in the City of New York, A. D. 1807."

Of Rev. Miles T. Wooley but little is known. At the time he was licensed he resided in Connecticut. Subsequently he removed to Otsego County, New York, where, some time in March, 1803, he organized "The First Universalist Society of the County of Otsego,"—the first Universalist organization west of New York city, and still in existence, worshipping in its church at Fly Creek, in that county. Mr. Wooley was eccentric, and did not long remain in the ministry.

Rev. Edward Turner was a native of Medfield, Mass., where he was born July 28, 1776. He became a Universalist when sixteen or seventeen years of age, at which time he was a student at Leicester Academy. Two years later he seems to have been intimately ac-

quainted with Rev. Hosea Ballou, with whom, as already noticed, he at that time conversed freely concerning the Unitarian views which Mr. Ballou was then promulgating. His first sermon was preached at Bennington, Vt., in 1798. When licensed, he was residing in Sturbridge, Mass. He was active for many years in denominational work, occupying many positions of trust and honor, and always sought after as an able and instructive preacher. "He was," says the late Dr. Ballou, "one of the most active and influential of the Universalist ministry," in 1811. The late Dr. Brooks, who published in the "Universalist Quarterly" for April and July, 1871, a biographical sketch of Mr. Turner, remarks: "Mr. Turner, it is probably not too much to say, was the foremost man in our early church in respect to scholarly and literary attainments." During the restorationist controversy — of which we shall have more to say under its special date — Mr. Turner withdrew from the Universalist denomination and, subsequently, preached among the Unitarians. He died Jan. 24, 1853, in his seventy-seventh year.

Rev. Joshua Flagg was born in 1773. He was a man of great native ability, but his usefulness was marred by his numerous eccentricities and his intense prejudices. His death occurred in Dana, Mass., in November, 1859, when he had passed his eighty-sixth year. The following just and appreciative notice appeared in the announcement of his death, in the "Universalist Register" for 1861: "Though of rude vigor and controversial spirit in his early days, when persecution and violent opposition were met on every side, yet his devotional spirit and earnest sincerity in later years

won general regard, and the clergy of his town, generally, attended his funeral and paid due tribute of respect to his memory."

Rev. Edwin Ferriss was a brother of Walter Ferriss, previously mentioned. He was born Feb. 20, 1777. At the time of his being licensed to preach he was living at Pawlingstown, N. Y., near the borders of Vermont. In 1802 he removed to Otsego County, N. Y., and there preached occasionally, but devoted most of his time to the cultivation of his farm. He was a plain man, of Quaker habits, thoroughly conscientious, and faithfully following the light as it was made manifest to him. On one occasion, he withdrew from the fellowship of the Universalists because they seemed to him to have no system of belief, no set of opinions in which all united, save the one idea of universal restoration. About this time (1827) he wrote and published a small book entitled "The Plain Restitutionist," in the preface to which he says: —

"Being fully convinced that I owe to the public world of mankind a systematic statement of my religious sentiments, that every person who pleases may read and plainly understand for himself my serious views of the sacred Scriptures, and of the nature of the righteous plan of divine grace, I am disposed to lay before the religious world what has been made plainly to appear to me as sacred truth. I feel this obligation so to do strongly impressed upon me as one voluntarily standing alone in the world as to my connection with any religious denomination. I once was a member of the General Convention of Universalists, but finding by careful inquiry among the brethren that although they were well agreed that all men will finally be saved, yet no regular system-

atic plan of grace to effect that desirable result was found to exist as a unanimous standard of doctrine among the Universalists. Many of them, I found, differed from me in theory. I found we could no longer walk together, and of course thought it my duty peaceably to withdraw from their connection, which they as peaceably consented to, and I was dismissed from being a member among them, but still continued to preach the same doctrine as before."

Like Caleb Rich, Mr. Ferriss starts with the theory that man was created in the divine image, but formed in flesh and blood; but the divine image is Christ, in whom all men are originally contained, and through the flesh they become alienated from their Head. Obedience to the spiritual demand of Jesus reinstates them. To this obedience the gospel calls, and man retraces his way by repentance and regeneration. Punishment is inflicted on the sinner, not on Christ, and punishment beyond this life is certain for the incorrigible; but all discipline is a means, and will result in leading to obedience.

The same year of the publication of his book he returned to fellowship with the denomination; but in 1831 he wrote to the standing clerk of the Chenango Association: —

"I withdraw for the present from the work of the ministry, and from any connection with the order of Universalists. But still I do not deny my belief in the doctrine. I would also inform you and them, that it is not because I have any charge against the order of Universalists, but having other business of a worldly nature, which very much occupies and troubles my mind at pres-

ent. I therefore cannot attend to the ministry with that energy which becomes a gospel preacher."

Whether he preached after this date is unknown. He died in Porter, Michigan, May 4, 1839.

The Convention, in 1800, also instructed their moderator, Rev. George Richards, to "correspond with the societies to the southward," meaning, no doubt, those in fellowship with the Philadelphia Convention; "and also with the Eastern Association," organized the previous year. It took steps towards order and regularity in its work, a due observance of the Christian ordinances, and protecting itself from evil-speaking tongues, by adopting seven recommendations, covering the following subjects, — that societies not then represented send messengers to the next Convention, and also forward a particular account of their condition; that all messengers be chosen annually on the first Sabbath in June; "that all societies not favored with preaching do, nevertheless, constantly assemble on the first day of the week, and if they have no other gift among them, that they attend to the reading of the Scriptures;" that all societies "pay peculiar solemnized attention to regularity and discipline;" that the societies "consider whether the ordinances of the New Testament are not the commandments of the Lord, the Saviour;" that members of the Convention "assemble on the evening of the day previous to their regular meeting," that delays in the morning session may be avoided; "that the council of the Convention do assemble in future at the private house of a brother or sister, as it becometh us to abstain from the appearance of evil." It is a fair inference from this last recommendation that some session, or sessions,

had been held in a public house, and if, as is most probable, this "appearance of evil" arose from the fact that intoxicating liquors were sold at such places, this may be placed among the first efforts of any ecclesiastical body in America to discountenance the use of intoxicants. At that time, and for many years after, the use of intoxicants so prevailed among all the sects, especially at associations, dedications, and ordinations, that, ordinarily, the bills for the liquors furnished were the largest item in the expenses of such occasions. The late Rev. Stephen R. Smith is authority for the statement that at the session of the General Convention at Westmoreland, N. H., in 1814, a resolution was passed that "Societies be requested not to furnish liquor at the subsequent meetings of that body."[1] There is no doubt that this is the earliest action of the kind taken by any sect, as it was not till thirteen years later that even temperance societies advocated total abstinence, and the publication of Dr. Lyman Beecher's lectures on intemperance induced religious bodies to discuss the subject and to pass resolutions on it.

We have now brought our sketch of the history of Universalism in America down to the close of the eighteenth century, the period to which we limited our effort in this volume. In the bounds of the New England Convention there were then the following preachers: —

In the District of Maine, Rev. Thomas Barns, Poland.

In Massachusetts, Revs. John Murray, Boston; Hosea Ballou, Dana; Edward Turner, Sturbridge; Caleb Rich, Warwick; Ebenezer Paine (of whom we have no

[1] Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate, March 17, 1848.

further knowledge), Williamsburg; James Babbitt (a man of fair abilities and of irreproachable character), Dana; John Foster, Taunton; Zephaniah Lathe, Grafton, and Joshua Flagg, residence unknown. Possibly, also, Revs. James Briggs and Samuel Smith, in Berkshire County.

In New Hampshire, Revs. David Ballou, Richmond; Edmund Pillsbury, Northwood; George Richards, Portsmouth, and Zebulon Streeter, residence unknown.

In Vermont, Revs. Joab Young, Strafford; William Farwell, Barre.

In Connecticut, Revs. Miles T. Wooley, residence unknown; Gamaliel Reynolds, Norwich, and Rev. Solomon Glover, Newtown. The latter became a Universalist preacher in 1800, and was ordained in 1801. He always resided at Newtown, living and dying in the house in which he was born. It is said that for twenty years he was the only preacher of Universalism in Connecticut. He was a man of strong native abilities and of a pure life. He died in 1842, at the advanced age of ninety-two years.

In New York, Revs. Walter and Edwin Ferriss, Pawlingstown.

The following named were in active service in the territory usually represented in the Philadelphia Convention: —

In Pennsylvania, Revs. David Evans, New Britain; Thomas Jones, Philadelphia; Noah Murray, Athens; Moses Park, Sheshequin.

In New Jersey, Revs. Artis Seagrave, Pilesgrove, Nicholas Cox, Kingwood; William Worth, Pittsgrove; Joseph Stephens, Shiloh.

In Maryland, Revs. William Hawkins and Mr. Pollard.

And, possibly, Revs. Duncan McLean and Donald Holmes in Virginia.

In all, there were certainly between thirty and thirty-five preachers of Universalism, possibly more, in the United States. Societies or churches were organized in several localities, in number about equal to — somewhat in excess of — the number of preachers, and, like them, scattered and wide apart in a large territory. Everywhere the people were eager to hear; and devoted, saintly men were at great personal sacrifice going forth, at the call of God, to occupy the opening fields.

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END OF VOL. I.

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First Universalist Sermon in Maine.

About the year 1800 Joseph McClellan, of Gray, invited a Universalist preacher to come to his home and deliver a sermon, says S. P. Mayberry in the Portland Argus. In due time, on horseback, with saddle bags containing a Bible and hymn book and change of raiment, he arrived in Gray. The meeting was notified to be held in a log school house, near what was afterward known as Mayalls Woolen Factory. The household Bible of Mr. McClellan was of larger and plainer print than the one owned by the preacher, and from this the text was selected and used as a reference at the meeting. This Bible is now in the possession of T E. McClellan, of Brunswick. This was the first Universalist sermon delivered in the district of Maine, now the State of Maine. Mr. McC. was a believer in Universal doctrine and Eliphas Phillips, another hearer, was known as a disciple of Christ. The faith was scattered. It took with the people and the result was that it has its stronghold in that town. We have a drawing of the school house by Mr. T. McClellan, who has reached the age of 93 years, can point out the location of the school house.